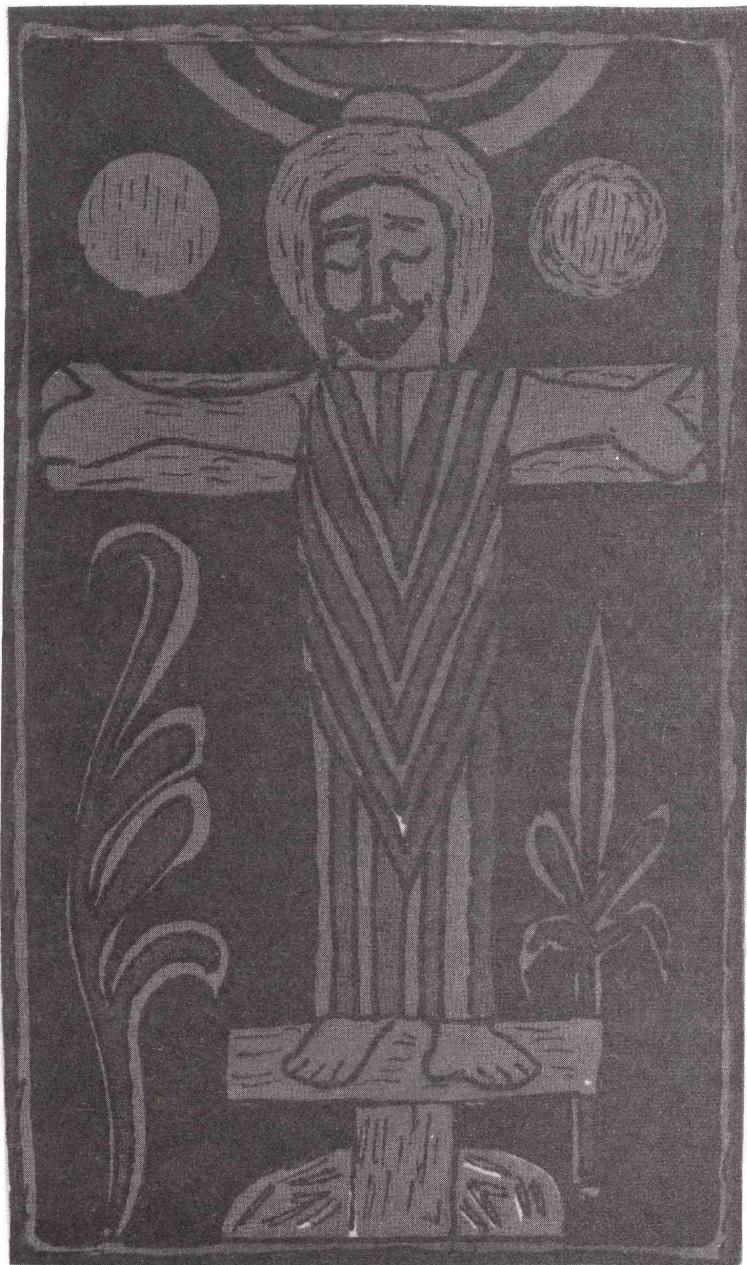


## A NOTE ON THE THEOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE DEAD CHRIST

It is generally assumed by art historians that the Byzantine iconography of the dead Christ on the cross is theologically inspired, that the image of *Christos paschōn* was created by Icon-venerating monks to stress the reality of Jesus' humanity and suffering – things they believed the Iconoclasts denied in refusing to portray Christ at all. The art-historical evidence adduced consists of two late ninth-century miniatures from the Chlouдов and Pantocrator Psalters<sup>1</sup> and a Palestinian icon of about 750 A.D. preserved in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai (hereafter referred to as B. 36).<sup>2</sup> In the former (which are of Venerationist provenience), the image of the dead Christ has clearly been used to make a Christological point,<sup>3</sup> but the same cannot be said of the eighth-century icon, which has no accompanying text.<sup>4</sup> Although B. 36 derives from the same milieu in which John of Damascus (d. ca. 749) composed his anti-Iconoclastic treatises, it cannot be proved that the icon shares his theological concerns.<sup>5</sup> For one thing, there is no necessary connection between art and ideas; for another, the iconography of the dead Christ is by no means solely compatible with Venerationist thought. Hence one cannot say with certainty that the iconography of *Christos paschōn* has been inspired by Iconodule theology.

Even if one assumes a universal connection between theology and art, the iconography of the dead Christ need not be limited to an Iconodule context. The earlier anti-Monophysite movement was also concerned with the reality of Christ's passion, as the writings of Anastasios, abbot of St. Catherine's (d. ca. 700 A.D.), clearly show.<sup>6</sup> In the *Hodegos*, a long anti-Monophysite tract written shortly after 641 (revised ca. 681), Anastasios not only stressed the concrete reality of Christ's humanity and suffering, but suggested the Orthodox utilize a picture or diagram (consisting of a cross with an inscription reading "God the Word, rational soul, and body") to point up these very things.<sup>7</sup> Indeed Hans Belting and Christa Belting-Ihm contend that B. 36 is to be understood as a product of this anti-Monophysite tradition.<sup>8</sup> Such an explanation is unlikely given the probable mid-eighth century date of B. 36, but there is certainly no *a priori* reason why the



anti-Monophysite Chalcedonians would *not* have looked favorably upon a picture of Christ dead on the cross. St. Catherine's B. 32,<sup>9</sup> whose date ca. 700 A.D. places it before the Iconoclastic controversy, raises some interesting questions in this respect. Because the

face of the painting is badly worn, one cannot tell if this handsome icon originally represented Christ dead on the cross; but the possibility that it did should not be dismissed on theological grounds. The point, again, is that the iconography of the dead Christ is by no means conceivable only within an Icon-venerating environment.

The peril of finding a locus for the iconography of the dead Christ solely in Venerationist theology becomes particularly clear when one remarks that the Monophysites themselves — scorned opponents of both the Icon-venerators and their Chalcedonian forerunners — stressed that Christ died and suffered in the flesh. Contemporary Orthodox polemic notwithstanding,<sup>10</sup> mature (post-Eutychian) Monophysite theology by no means denied Christ's human qualities and mortality. What it did deny was that Christ suffered in a distinctly human *physis*.<sup>11</sup> According to Severus of Antioch, the entire economy of the incarnation suffered on the cross: not that God suffered insofar as he was God, but that the sufferings of the flesh were to be considered God's inasmuch as God's own body was made up of this very flesh.<sup>12</sup> "The Lord of Glory suffered in the flesh," wrote Severus; "the Lord of Glory was crucified."<sup>13</sup>

There is some evidence, admittedly problematic, which suggests that the image of the dead Christ may actually have been known in Monophysite circles.<sup>14</sup> If a drawing of Robert Forrer is to be trusted, the dead Christ appears on a Coptic silk scarf woven at Achmim-Panopolis in Upper Egypt.<sup>15</sup> This textile crucifixion tableau (one of nine scenes embroidered on the scarf) shows Christ upright on the cross dressed in a magnificent colobium, feet on a suppedaneum. The arms are extended stiffly to each side, the head turned slightly rightward. Flanking the cross are two stylized plants and over its arms are the sun and moon. The concentric circles over Christ's head represent the spheres of heaven.

The tableau itself (measuring 10 cm. high by 5½ wide) is stylistically consistent with examples of Coptic art which have survived from antiquity. Save for the fact that the eyes are closed, Christ's face is executed in the same rectangular manner as that of Dionysius on an Egyptian embroidery which Klaus Wessel believes to be of the sixth century.<sup>16</sup> The V-shaped front of the colobium is characteristic of the stylized way in which other Coptic works of art portray the folds of garments: e.g. a tombstone relief of Shek-Abade (dated in the fourth century), and a sixth-century

tomb-relief of the Fayum.<sup>17</sup> The colored stripes of the colobium recall other textiles featuring alternating bands of color,<sup>18</sup> and the colors themselves — red, blue, gold, and green — are typical of Egyptian tapestry. The same combination of hues occurs on an embroidery Wessel believes to be a representation of Mithras, perhaps of the fifth century.<sup>19</sup>

The style of the panel, then, appears to be characteristic of Coptic textile art. Forrer assigns the scarf to the sixth or seventh century.<sup>20</sup> Such a date may well be correct. A relatively early date would seem to be justified by the fact that the crucifixion panel resembles other early representations of Christ on the cross. Christ's posture on the cross is very much like his bearing on a bronze relief from Smyrna (thought to be from the sixth or seventh century) and on an enamel Byzantine reliquary (perhaps of the seventh or eighth century).<sup>21</sup> And the semi-circular spheres between Christ's nimbus and the top of the picture resemble St. Catherine's B. 32, which also has a blue half-disc representing the heavens. The scarf may well have been woven around 700 A.D. — a date at which the Coptic Church was securely within the Monophysite fold.

Admittedly, a later date is possible. The difficulty here is that, as in the case of the textiles alluded to above, there is no firm (inscriptive) evidence for dating the bronze relief or enamel reliquary. One can only say that the crucifixion scenes on the bronze cross, the enamel reliquary, and the silk scarf seem to be executed in accordance with early stylistic canons. But they may just as well be later copies of early prototypes.

It is only reasonable to have some reservations about the value of Forrer's drawing. For one thing, the scarf, which was housed at Strasbourg in the early part of this century, no longer exists. Hence there is no way to check the accuracy of the copy. Forrer claims that the scarf's condition was generally good,<sup>22</sup> but he does not identify which panels were well preserved and which less so. His drawing of the crucifixion tableau may well be a "restoration." But it is probably trustworthy. Forrer took pains to convey a sense of the scarf's textility. This is not evident in the color drawing referred to in n. 15, but it is in another copy.<sup>23</sup> In the latter, the horizontal lines formed by the weaving are clearly indicated. If one combines these two pictures in his mind, he can get some idea of the probable appearance of the original object.

It is self-evident that copies cannot be accorded the same evi-

dential value as originals, but they should not therefore be dismissed out of hand. Grimaldi's sketch of the early eighth-century crucifixion scene that existed on the wall over the entrance to the *Oratorium Praesepe Sanctae Mariae* in Old St. Peter's<sup>24</sup> is frequently alluded to in studies of the iconography of the crucifixion. The Coptic scarf deserves mention as well.

But the argument made here – that the iconography of the dead Christ is not solely congenial to Venerationist theology – is not affected by the dating of the silk scarf. It is enough to recognize that the Monophysites acknowledged the reality of Christ's death and suffering as readily as the Icon-venerators and Chalcedonians.<sup>25</sup> There is no *a priori* reason why all representations of the dead Christ must reflect Orthodox Christological concerns. If one believes that the iconography of the dead Christ articulates theological ideas, one can look to at least three milieux in which the image of *Christos paschōn* would have been appropriate.

One may question, however, if art historians are correct in supposing that representations of the dead Christ (or any crucifixion picture for that matter) must reflect complex theological concerns.<sup>26</sup> On the whole, Christian iconography tends to deal with rather simple themes. Beyond a very basic level there is no necessary connection between the ideas of a given environment and the iconography produced in it. "The world of art and visual space," it has well been said, "has its own logic, its own emotional and intellectual order."<sup>27</sup> The icon may indeed possess an otherworldly, mystical significance, but such meaning transcends the technical formulations of school theology. The icon serves a religious purpose which can be described in theological terms, but its mode and message are *sui generis*. It is the form and color of the icon – its material and formal characteristics – which awaken the believer's spiritual sense.<sup>28</sup> Unless there is explicit evidence linking a picture to theological argument (as in the case of the monastic psalters), it seems unwise to overinterpret and reduce visual imagery to sophisticated verbal assumption.

Although B. 36 came into being within an anti-Iconoclastic milieu, one cannot assume its artist had a Christological axe to grind. Nor can one presume that the artist of the Coptic crucifixion panel (if it be granted evidential value) regarded his picture as a cipher of Monophysite theology. Each artist may simply have intended to illustrate an event related in the biblical text – Christ's death on the cross – for devotional purposes. Since all post-Gnos-

tic Christian groups readily acknowledged that Christ had indeed died on the cross (the point was stressed in the Jerusalem Holy Week Office as early as the fourth century), it would be curious if some artist had not sooner or later come to depict Christ's death in a more or less literal, albeit non-naturalistic, way. In the absence of any strong evidence to the contrary, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that the Palestinian artist who painted B. 36 (our best evidence that the dead Christ existed at an early date) attempted nothing more.<sup>29</sup> This is not to deny that the image of the dead Christ was later appropriated by the Icon-venerators for doctrinal reasons, but to suggest that the *origins* of the iconography of *Christos paschōn* may not have been tied to any theological school. Because of the fragmentary nature of the evidence, it is unlikely the question will ever be resolved with certainty.

## NOTES

1. See John R. Martin, "The Dead Christ on the Cross in Byzantine Art" in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend* (Princeton, 1955), pp. 189-96, plate 4; and André Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme Byzantin* (Paris, 1957), plate 158.
2. Kurt Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Icons*, 1 (Princeton, 1976), plate 25.
3. Martin, "The Dead Christ," pp. 189-96.
4. Weitzmann, *Monastery of Saint Catherine*, pp. 7, 63, links B. 36 with anti-Iconoclastic theology.
5. As suggested by Weitzmann, *Icons from South Eastern Europe and Sinai* (London, 1968), p. xi.
6. Marcel Richard, "Anastase le Sinaïte, l'Hodegos, et le Monothélisme," *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 16 (1958), pp. 29-42.
7. PG 89: 197C, lines 7-11.
8. "Das Kreuzbild im 'Hodegos,'" in *Tortulae: Studien zu Altchristlichen und Byzantinischen Monumenten, Römisches Quartalschrift*, Suppl. 30 (1966), pp. 30-39.
9. Weitzmann, *Monastery of Saint Catherine*, plate 23.
10. e.g. Anastasios' *Hodegos*, PG 89: 35-310; and the arguments of such Icon-venerating champions as Nikephoros of Constantinople and Theodore of Studios, for whom the Iconoclasts "were nothing less than Monophysites, who denied the human reality of the Saviour and reduced him to a phantom" (Martin, "The Dead Christ," p. 193).
11. See Joseph Lebon, "La Christologie du monophysisme syrien" in Aloys Grillmeier and H. Bacht (eds.), *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, 1 (Wurzburg, 1951), pp. 550-80.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 571, n. 106.
13. *Ibid.*, and p. 572, n. 110.

14. Recent work has shown that the Monophysites were neither Iconoclasts nor any less inclined to venerate icons than Chalcedonians. See Sebastian Brock, "Iconoclasm and the Monophysites" and Marlia Mundell, "Monophysite Church Decoration" in *Iconoclasm*, ed. Anthony Bryer and Judith Herrin (Birmingham, 1977), pp. 53-57 and 59-74.

15. Robert Forrer, *Römische und Byzantinische Seiden-Textilien aus dem Grabers-  
wilde von Achmim-Panopolis* (Strasbourg, 1891), plate 17, no. 8. To the best of my  
knowledge, this picture has never been mentioned in discussions of the iconography of  
the crucifixion – either to defend it or to dismiss it (see n. 26). Some brief comments are  
in order.

Wessel, *Koptische Kunst: Die Spätantike in Ägypten* (Recklingshausen, 1966),  
p. 206.

17. Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London, 1971), no. 8, p. 15 and  
no. 67, p. 95.

18. Wessel, *Koptische Kunst*, color plate 17, p. 209.

19. Ibid., color plate 22, p. 243. See also plate 20, p. 231 and plate 23, p. 247 for  
the brilliance of the hues achieved in this ancient textile art.

20. *Römische und Byzantinische Seiden-Textilien*, pp. 22-23. The reasons Forrer  
gives for such a date, however, are hardly credible.

21. Gertrud Schiller, *Ikonographie der Christlichen Kunst*, 2 (Gutersloh, 1968),  
nos. 333 and 331.

22. *Römische und Byzantinische Seiden-Textilien*, p. 21.

23. Reproduced in Paul Thoby, *Le Crucifix des Origines au Concile du Trent* (Nantes, 1959), no. 17. I have been unable to determine where Forrer originally published this  
drawing.

24. Giacomo Grimaldi, *Descrizione della Basilica Antica di S. Pietro in Vaticana*, ed.  
Reto Niggli (Vatican, 1972), fol. 90v-91r (pp. 119-120), fig. 39; also fol. 94v-95r (pp.  
127-128), fig. 42.

25. Thoby's contention that Monophysitism is incompatible with the iconography of  
the dead Christ is insupportable (*Le Crucifix*, p. 26). Only the branch of Monophysitism  
that followed the teachings of Julian of Halicarnassus might have had some scruples  
about showing Christ dead on the cross. It was the contention of these "Phantasiasts"  
that because the body of Christ was of heavenly origin, it was incorruptible. See Mundell  
(art. cit. above in n. 14), pp. 73-74.

26. There has long been a tendency to read ideas into the iconography of the crucifixion on somewhat tenuous evidence. Among the best known studies of this sort – un-  
deniably impressive – are Aloys Grillmeier, *Der Logos am Kreuz* (Munich, 1956); Karl  
Rahner, "Patristisch-ikongraphische Probleme der Darstellung des Gekreuzigten,"  
*Scholastik*, 32 (1957), pp. 410-16; Lodewijk H. Grondijs, *Autour de l'Iconographie  
byzantine du Crucifié mort sur la Croix* (Leiden, [1960?]); Klaus Wessel, "Frühbyz-  
antinische Darstellung der Kreuzigung Christi," *Rivista di Archeologia Christiana*, 36  
(1960), 45-71; Ekkart Sauser, *Frühchristliche Kunst* (Innsbruck, 1966); and Reiner  
Hausscherr, *Der Tote Christus am Kreuz*, Diss. Bonn, 1963 – the last concerned primarily  
with Western iconography. Weitzmann's approach is a good deal more cautious.

27. Samuel Laeuchli, review of Othmar Keel's *The Symbolism of the Biblical World:  
Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms* (New York, 1977) in *The  
New Review of Books and Religion*, 2 (May, 1978), 28.

28. See Constantine Cavarnos, *Orthodox Iconography* (Belmont, Mass., 1977),  
pp. 38-45.

29. St. Catherine's B. 50 and B. 51 (Weitzmann, plates 32 and 107) – both from the  
ninth century – likewise give no indication of being theological ciphers. Though B. 51 is  
furnished with an inscription on its border, it merely invites the believer to be filled with  
fear and remorse at the sight of Christ's sufferings, in this reflecting an ancient strain of  
Eastern penitential piety eloquently expressed in the writings of Greek Ephraem. See the  
"Sermo de Passione Salvatoris nostri Iesu Christi," ed. Joseph Assemani, *Opera Omnia  
quae extant Graece, Syriace, Latine*, Vol. 6 [Graece et Latine 3], (Rome, 1746), pp. 244-  
48. We have to do here with devotional, not theological material.



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*RUDOLF SCHMID*

## **A ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW OF THE LAW ,**

As you have invited the Old Testament representative of our Faculty to put forward, within the framework of a colloquium between Christians of the Orthodox Church and Jews, a few thoughts on the Law as understood by the Roman Catholic world, you will not, I take it, be interested to hear about the history of the exegesis developed within the Roman Catholic Church. This would take us too far from the subject of our colloquium and moreover would require another round of talks. It is therefore my intention to raise a few points of Christian interpretation which, in my opinion, will bring out more clearly those points in the present-day exegesis of the Pentateuch on which we are agreed, while at the same time indicating just where a difference in our assessment remains as a topic for further clarification.

### **I. The Law in the Living Stream of Revelation**

#### **1. The Law as Torah and as Response**

It seems to me to be a matter of first-class significance to a colloquium between Christians and Jews that the very concept of Law has, in the light of contemporary Bible exegesis, been released from the disastrously restricted interpretation of the past and exposed to view in its full range of meaning. This is particularly evident from the fact that nowadays other complementary and clarifying concepts are associated with that of Law; I am thinking of such ideas as 'Instruction,' 'Guidance' and 'Revelation.' This phenomenon derives special importance from the fact that the term 'Law' was formerly understood to signify exclusively the notion of statutory enactments, of a rule of conduct formulated by legal standards. From this concept it was but a step—and an alarmingly short step—to the opposition between Law and love, to interpreting the fulfillment of the Law as a purely outward performance of precepts, as externalized religion, as mere legalism.

There was no need of today's rejection of legal controls to decry Jewish 'piety under the Law' as something inferior.

On the other hand, where the concept of 'Law' is given its wider biblical meaning of instruction, where it is seen not merely to signify legal norms but to include the full revelation of a loving God, such a view enables the believer to understand far more clearly that his religious life is not merely governed by paragraphs and statutes but rather is guided by God's deeds and words, performed and uttered in love.

For evidence of this transformation I would refer you to some books of religious instruction. For a long time it was usual to begin the enumeration of the Decalogue with the words: "Thou shalt have no other gods besides Me." The important introductory sentence was simply omitted: "I am the Lord, thy God, who brought thee out of Egypt, from the house of bondage." If these words are omitted—as they were—the reference to the people's previous experience of God disappears. It is just on the ground of this experience that a certain attitude and certain behavior are demanded of man. When the introductory clause is included and understood, the observance of the commandments loses its absolute character and is seen as man's response to God's word and deed, which always precede it. "Law and grace," "human achievement and Divine Gift"—these are examples of the alternatives which proved such a fatal obstacle to an understanding of biblical Law and of Jewish piety alike.

## 2. Law as man's response – the need for continual fulfillment

Historical and critical research on the *Torah* has also liberated some texts dealing with Law from the petrification in which they were hitherto detached from the living historical development. On the one hand, it becomes clear in the light of the homiletical exhortation in the Bible that each generation in Israel is called upon to make its decision anew. We find in Deuteronomy 5:2ff.: "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers but with *us*, even *us*, who are all of *us* *here* alive *this day*." (*lo' 'et 'abotenu karat YHWH 'et-habberit hazzo't ki' 'ittanu 'anahnu 'elleh poh hayyom kulanu hayyim*).

If in accordance with the findings of recent scholars, this passage is recognized to be a homily delivered during worship, the declaration in Deuteronomy acquires additional impressiveness for the faithful who were present whenever it was delivered anew: the call was not addressed merely to Moses' generation, but also to

me; today I cannot evade its demands.

Further, work in the field of exegesis brings out the living immediacy of the tradition to which we owe the Law, as comparison with other similar texts leads to a gradual expansion of the text in which the commandments are formulated. Such expansion serves to accentuate the demand made on the individual or its motivation by providing it with a reason. In the Decalogue one may point to the last commandment, in which with reference to possessions the verb *hamad* was later changed to *hit'awwah* (inner desire), or to the fact that the original commandments were later accompanied by reasons so that their fulfillment was charged with a content of rational inwardness.

### 3. Differences in stress

It is important for a correct understanding of the Law in its wider implications to note that historical and social changes have left their mark also in the Divine commands, so that a differing degree of stress was laid on identical precepts in consequence of concrete historical situations in the life of God's people.

Thus one can hardly fail to observe an amelioration in the legal status of women in Deuteronomy (cf. the law relating to slaves: in Deuteronomy 15:12-18, as opposed to Exodus 21:2-11, the woman receives the same treatment as a man). Similarly, in the Decalogue as transmitted in Deuteronomy 5:21 the wife is assured of special treatment and is not placed on the same level in the household as slaves and the like.

Whoever reads the prophetic writings of the exilic period, especially Ezekiel and Isaiah 56-58, cannot fail to see how the observance of the Sabbath and of circumcision is given a far stronger emphasis than was the case during the earlier period of Israel's history. In the earlier period, we find no express legal injunction of circumcision (the practice of which was at that time universal and undisputed), while the commandment to observe the Sabbath is simply inserted among the other commandments.

Something similar is observable in post-exilic times, especially during the Maccabean period, with regard to the dietary laws. This is by no means surprising, since Antiochus IV (to mention no others) looked upon observance of these laws as evidence of adherence to Judaism.

The living character of Israel's legal tradition is likewise indicated by the prophetic writings which, in accordance with the

needs of the time, gave priority of emphasis to social obligations as opposed to ritual observances (e.g. Isaiah 1:10-17; 18:6-10).

What conclusions can a joint colloquium of Christians and Jews draw from such a view of biblical Law? On the one hand, a greater sense of common purpose emerges, insofar as—to put the matter for the moment in negative terms—if the *Tanach* is properly understood, observance of the Law may not in itself be stigmatized as externalized piety, legalism or even hypocrisy. But our sense of common purpose can also be expressed affirmatively: when obedience to the Divine precepts is recognized and acknowledged as man's answer to God's love, we gain a genuine insight which unites Jews and Christians, whether they refer to *sema Yisra'el* or to some New Testament text such as John 14.21: "Whose hath and keepeth My commandments, he loveth Me," or Matthew 7.21: "Not everyone who saith unto Me: Lord, Lord! will come into the Kingdom of Heaven, but only he who doeth according to the will of My Father in Heaven."

On the other hand, some differences of viewpoint are also more clearly displayed inasmuch as the Law is seen to be a part of the living stream of revelation which is supplemented by the messages of the prophets. The special emphasis laid on particular precepts need not to be looked upon as absolute and unconditional, but can and must be viewed in relative terms where the circumstances prevailing at some particular time demanded greater emphasis. This means in practice: a) the Law should not be evaluated as a homogeneous *corpus*; one should rather observe a scale of different values among the various laws; b) the Christian recognizes a further amplification, or rather completion of the Law in the message and the works of Jesus Christ and therefore in the New Testament; when such recognition involves a reappraisal of certain precepts or a new assessment of their relative importance, the Christian may not close his eyes to the necessity of such a change. Here we come to an essentially different evaluation of the same Law, which both sides recognize as divinely revealed. Such a difference demands, in a dialogue between Jews and Christians, a high degree of candor on both sides, and a readiness to take the partner's differing viewpoint seriously even if, for reasons of conviction, one cannot share it. Against this general background we can illustrate what has just been said by reference to the laws of purity.

## **II. The Laws of Purity (especially in Leviticus 11-15): Old Testament Exegesis in the Conflict between Rabbinical and Christian Teaching**

One cannot ignore the fact that on the one hand Judaism lays great stress on the laws of purity, especially Leviticus 11-15, since it still retains the observance of these laws and has expounded their significance and their range of application in the discussions of the rabbis. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the Christian Church disregards these precepts of the *Tanach*, although this same Church asserts the divine inspiration and authority of these parts of the *Tanach*, as it does for the other parts. This question, therefore, seems to me a typical example of a theme for discussion between Christians and Jews.

### **1. The Subject Matter of the Laws of Purity**

Many people spontaneously connect the concepts “pure” and “impure” with the idea of the dietary laws. But even from a cursory glance at Leviticus 11-15, we can learn how this narrow view of the legislation on purity and impurity is incorrect. It is true that Leviticus 11, which distinguishes between clean and unclean beasts, is connected with the dietary laws, but this is only one aspect of the matter. Impurity is caused not only by eating, but also by contact with unclean beasts, as also by contact with clean beasts as soon as they have become carrion. Furthermore, the concept of impurity extends also to some incidents in sexual life (birth: Leviticus 12; discharge from the organs of procreation: Leviticus 15), as well as certain changes in the human body, in houses and utensils, which can indicate an impairment of their normal healthy situation.

### **2. The Development of Purity Legislation**

Anyone who uses the methods of historical criticism to examine the text of the *Tanach* must conclude that the present formulation of the Purity Legislation dates from the period of the Exile, i.e., from the sixth century B.C. This does not, of course, mean that the distinction between clean and unclean was previously unknown in Israel. The people of God lived in an environment to which such a distinction was familiar. For early examples cf. II Kings 5.1-27 (*Naaman*); Genesis 7 (the flood-J); Genesis 35.2 (Jacob-E); I Samuel 20.26 (David).

On the question of the origin of these ideas we must avoid any one-sided explanation; no doubt a number of factors contributed

to the final formulation of the list. One can assume as possible elements:

- considerations of race and rank;
- custom: “what is done” and “what is not done”;
- feelings of repulsion: boils and ulcers; certain animals (snakes and mice);
- defence against foreign cults: hares, swine (here such an explanation breaks down, since rams and bulls rank as clean beasts);
- awe of life and death: incidents in sexual life, birth, death (corpses); beasts of prey which feed on carrion (vultures, etc.); rats, as transmitting disease (hygiene); hemorrhage, as diminishing vital strength;
- concern for the purity of the race, hence the ban on mixtures (cf. Leviticus 19.19; Deuteronomy 22.9-11; 24.4).

In this protracted process the priestly legislation made a quite decisive contribution. Three elements in particular must be mentioned:

a) **Systemization of the Precepts**

Certain rudiments of systemization are to be found in Deuteronomy (especially 14.3-21). As compared with this rudimentary system the priestly legislation shows a marked advance, inasmuch as it attempts a comprehensive presentation and also includes other forms of impurity and purity in addition to those contracted by eating or touching. Two points are notable in this systemization as it appears in the priestly tradition:

- wherever possible the list is prefaced by a statement of principle so that the believer is given a basic rule which is relatively easy to apply (cf. Leviticus 11.2 with Deuteronomy 14.6); where there is no guiding principle, the only alternative is enumeration as that of unclean birds (Leviticus 11.13-19);
- ways to overcome impurity are also suggested (Leviticus 11.32-44a; cf. Numbers 19: water of purification).

b) **Classification and Inclusion in the Law of the Covenant**

Here, too, Deuteronomy shows certain rudiments, though at this stage more attention was paid to practical considerations and comparatively little was expressly laid down as law (e.g. sanctification for war); we shall need to deal with this aspect later in connection with the significance of these laws.

c) **Theological Argument**

Observance of the laws of purity is not merely a matter of fixing certain commands. On the contrary, man is invited, by rea-

soned argument, to affirm the necessity for the law from his inner conviction:

- Deuteronomy 14.21: “For thou art a holy people unto the LORD thy God,” or, in still clearer terms:
- Leviticus 11.44f: “For I am the LORD your God; sanctify yourselves therefore and be ye holy; for I am holy; neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of swarming things that moveth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that brought you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God, ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.” Thus by observing the laws of purity Israel is to give a sign that it wishes to belong to God Who has chosen it and that it lives in a manner befitting its election.

### **3. Meaning of the Purity Legislation**

Since we find a certain development of these purity laws within the Bible itself, we may perhaps attempt to draw some conclusions as to their significance. Among other nations we constantly observe that their notions of purity fall within the area of custom and taboo; hence the danger of thereby opening the door to magical restraints and practices. The legislation of God’s people protected them against such tendencies by setting before them a clearly delimited and systematically classified number of cases in which impurity could be contracted. In addition to this, the Law also shows the believer how he can be freed from uncleanness. Hence we learn that:

a) Every spore of human life and conduct is subject to the will of God. The faith of Israel does not recognize any dichotomy of the world into a sphere determined by the Divine will and another left arbitrarily to man’s disposition. Throughout his whole life, from morning to evening and from evening to morning, the believing Israelite devotes himself to the service of God, to whose revealed will he submits. Such a rule of life should hold good also for the Christian Church.

b) It is man’s responsibility to carry out the Divine will. Just as man should be constantly motivated by fresh reasoning towards a conscious affirmation and obedience, so the priestly code attempts to give divinely-based reasons for the distinction between clean and unclean. We find quite often that in the observance of moral precepts the Jew is called upon to imitate the behavior of his Maker. For example, on the commandment to observe the Sabbath, the earlier reason “God led His people to freedom” (Deuter-

onomy 5.15). The Israelite should therefore ensure, by allowing him to observe the Sabbath, that the slave can rest like himself. The later reason "God Himself rested on the seventh day" (Exodus 20.11). The Sabbath becomes a symbol and a foretaste of God-given repose.

A similar argument is applied also to the laws of purity. Leviticus 11.43-45 (unclean animals); ritual cleanliness is a symbol of *separation for the service of God*. Cf. Deuteronomy 14.21; 23.15. Here it is evident that the priestly code found in the purity legislation means vividly to demonstrate the election and, to a certain extent, the isolation of God's people. Man is required to affirm the Divine ordering, which began at the Creation of the world by the separation (of heaven and earth, land and water). In this way, God's people are marked off from their environment and become aware of their special, unchangeable greatness.

c) Persistance in the face of attack. This clear distinction from the outside world and conviction of inner identity acquired an especially vital importance at certain times of persecution, as during the Maccabean period in the second century B.C. At that time, observance of the purity laws became the distinguishing mark of the Jew. (Cf. the martyrdom of Eleazar in II Maccabees 6.18-31 and of the seven brothers in II Maccabees 7.1-42; Daniel and his companions at the Persian court in Daniel 1; also I Maccabees 1.47, 62). A similar tendency is to be found in the letter of Aristeas (especially 139-149).

Against this biblical background, the later developments in Judaism come as no surprise. In the history of Judaism it is clear that the purity laws were a potent factor in bringing the Jews into contrast with their environment and often afforded the Gentiles an excuse for unjustified rejection of them. On the other hand, the Jews built up the protective barrier of which Eleazar speaks in the Letter of Aristeas (no. 139) and which, together with other factors, contributed to the maintenance of Jewish identity.

But how can developments in the Christian Church be reconciled with belief in the Divine origin of the Scriptures? Did not Jesus of Nazareth deny that these precepts had any significance? Did not the early Church sweep away the entire system? A clear statement of the matter occurs in Mark 7.1-23 (Matthew 15.1-20): "Not that which cometh into a man from outside can defile him; only that which goeth out of a man's mouth can defile" (cf. the explanation in 5.17-23).

The parable of the Good Samaritan puts the emphasis differently: it is not the priest's or the Levite's concern for his purity and the Temple service, but rather the stranger's kindly deed that is of first importance. In Peter's vision (Acts 10.9-16), the removal of the distinction between clean and unclean animals marks the borderline between Jew and heathen. Furthermore, it must not be overlooked that a certain polarization took place during the last centuries B.C. In particular, such communities as the Pharisees and the Qumran sect maintained a rigid separatism not only as against non-Jews but equally against other groups within Judaism. The people of Qumran refused to recognize the polluted Temple, while some circles of Pharisees despised the unschooled "country folk" as incapable of learning or practising the Law. In both cases rigorous separation was demanded and the community was protected against defilement by rules of purity similar to those which were applied to the priests for the Temple service. Such tendencies were quite clearly repudiated by Jesus. He recognized no separation between the pure and sinners. Such a separation would come about at the Last Judgment in the latter days.

He did, however, recognize the authority of the priesthood to confirm the healing of lepers: "Go, show thyself to the priest," he commands the leper in Mark 1.44, and bids him obey the Mosaic injunction as he continues: "and offer the sacrifice of purification as Moses ordained: this shall be for them a proof (of thy healing)." (Parallel passages: Matthew 8.1-4; Luke 5.1-14; also Luke 17.14.) But he touches the sick man in his uncleanness and seems to be little concerned about becoming unclean himself (Mark 1.41).

Very different is Jesus' attitude when it is a matter of deciding between alternatives, i.e. where anxiety to preserve outward cleanliness is allowed to outweigh the sole decisive factor — purity of the heart. Compared with this purity of thought and deed, the priestly or Pharisaic questions about clean and unclean become of secondary importance, or, indeed, meaningless.

If we do not merely seize upon a few sayings of Jesus, but contemplate his whole message, he cannot be considered to have simply ignored the laws of ritual purity. They are not just wrong, something to be resisted, but they are of minor importance and, compared with ethical purity, insignificant. Jesus' teaching puts them in perspective, and for Christians this view is the authoritative interpretation of the Biblical Law.

Hence the step taken by the early Church appears a logical con-

sequence. Because Judaism as a whole could not take this step, although a great number of Jews, viz. Jesus' disciples, admitted Jesus' claim to be the Messiah, it followed that Judaism and the Church went different ways. Moreover, it was obvious that the Greeks who came to believe in Jesus could not possibly live with these restrictions. What was of special concern to Jews and, by contrast, of less significance to Jesus, threatened to become a dangerous barrier – not against unbelievers, but within the ranks of God's people of the New Testament. That which was no longer of decisive importance could no longer, in the light of Jesus' teaching, be allowed to trouble the unity of the community of disciples. It was therefore abrogated.

If this interpretation is correct, we have here a typical example of how, amid the living stream of revelation, the Law is to be seen not as an absolute, but rather as an instruction demanding a response which God's people must render anew in every age according to the guiding revelation of God Himself. In this dynamic process the Law has stood throughout centuries of Biblical revelation. If we succeed in taking this inner dynamic seriously, then perhaps Jews and Christians, though according to their varying standpoints they may not perhaps come to the same conclusions at all points, may still at least be able to build a common future and live together in mutual respect and love.



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*BISHOP MAXIMOS AGHIORGOUSSIS*

## **A THEOLOGICAL APOLOGIA FOR THE FORTHCOMING GREAT AND HOLY COUNCIL**

Both the great need and the theological basis for the coming Council are self-evident. In fact, there should be no need for an *apologia* for the Council. However, anti-Council spokesmen have arisen and have gathered followers, questioning both the need for and the feasibility of convening a true Ecumenical Council.

One of the most articulate anti-Council spokesmen is Father Justin Popovich. In a letter to the Serbian hierarchy on 7 May 1977,<sup>1</sup> Father Popovich makes a variety of remarks of very unequal value regarding the forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. Some of his remarks are indeed quite pertinent; others are quite unwarranted. Yet, the questions asked by Father Popovich are the questions that many Orthodox Christians also have concerning the Council. Father Popovich is correct when he says that his “cry of conscience . . . is neither alone, nor isolated in the Orthodox world whenever there is mention of that council.”<sup>2</sup> The concerns voiced by Father Justin Popovich and other brothers and sisters in Orthodoxy, whether legitimate or not, whether pertinent or not, deserve our attention. It is my desire to attempt to respond to these concerns, undertaking a theological *apologia*, a defense, for the upcoming Great and Holy Council.

The main apprehensions of Father Popovich are that no real need for a Council exists at this time, that the proposed agenda of the forthcoming Council is artificial, that this Council will only serve the “neo-papist” aspirations of Constantinople and Moscow, that it will not be free in expressing itself, and that it will not be truly ecumenical since many residential and thus canonical bishops (i.e. bishops with flocks, such as the bishops of the Synod of the Russian Church Outside of Russia and the bishops of the Orthodox Church in America) will not be present at the Council. In his letter, Father Popovich laments the “rush” with which Constantinople conducts the preparations for the Council. He also laments the fact that Constantinople augments the number of

titular bishops, bishops without a flock, who are proclaimed “residential” (*ἐν ἐνεργείᾳ*, active, thus canonical, as opposed to *ψιλῷ τῷ τίτλῳ*, that is, titular bishops). According to Father Justin, these bishops not actually having a flock and representing only themselves will have power to vote in the Council, thus making decisions for the flock of truly canonical bishops without being entitled to do so.

Moreover, Father Popovich feels that true Councils have always been called occasionally, to fight heresies as they arose; they have not been called, as he alleges this coming Council has been, to deal with a list of academic questions taken from a “scholastic-protestant problematic.” True Councils, he says, have always dealt with questions pertaining to salvation in Christ, the person of Christ, His divinity, His Incarnation, as well as questions pertaining to ecclesiology. Father Popovich suspects that the main topics of the Council will be problems concerning the order of precedence among the Orthodox churches, with the view to establishing the position of Constantinople as the second Rome. He does recognize, however, the importance of at least two topics: the question of the Orthodox diaspora and ecumenism. Indeed, both of these are important ecclesiological topics. Yet, Father Popovich doubts that the present conditions would guarantee a Council which would give a solution to these problems which would be “correct, Orthodox, and according to the teaching of the Fathers.”<sup>3</sup> Father Justin assumes that those interested in the solution of the diaspora problem will not even be invited to the Council, and that Constantinople will attempt to solve this problem in its own interest, that being the submission of the entire Orthodox diaspora to itself. Furthermore, he is uneasy over the fact that most of the pre-conciliar meetings have been held on the territory of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which according to him reveals the intention of this patriarchate to monopolize the Council.

Father Popovich concludes his remarks with the following statement:

Keeping all this in mind and painfully aware of the situation of the contemporary Orthodox Church and of the world in general . . . my conscience once more obliges me to turn with insistence and beseeching to the Holy Council of Bishops of the martyred Serbian Church: let our Serbian Church abstain from participating in the preparations for the ‘ecumenical council,’ indeed from participating in the council itself. For should this council,

God forbid, actually come to pass, only one kind of result can be expected from it: *schisms, heresies, and the loss of many souls*. Considering the question from the point of view of the apostolic and patristic and historical experience of the Church, such a council, instead of healing, will but open up new wounds in the body of the Church and inflict upon her new problems and new misfortunes.<sup>4</sup>

There cannot be a more pessimistic view than this with regard to the forthcoming Council, its preparation, convocation, agenda, composition, and purpose. Certainly some of the remarks and apprehensions of Father Popovich are well-intentioned cautions advanced by a concerned Christian – especially of the spiritual caliber of Father Popovich. However, I cannot agree with the content of most of his remarks and do not feel compelled to refute each point Father Popovich makes since some are clearly unfounded. For instance, the apprehension of Father Justin that the representatives of the diaspora themselves will not be present at the Council to discuss their own case is without foundation. In fact, in response to a telegram sent to Geneva by the SCOBA Chairman, Archbishop Iakovos, the Preparatory Pre-Synodal Conference resolved in their deliberations that the diaspora questions would not be discussed in the absence of those involved, but in consultation with them. Actually, all the parties involved have already been contacted and have been asked to offer their opinions, which in turn will be submitted to all the Orthodox Churches for study.

The main problems to be dealt with in the Council are not the problems of ranking, but precisely the problems of diaspora, ecumenism, and presence of the Church in today's world—in short, ecclesiological problems. Moreover, the agenda of the future Council includes important 'conscience problems' for today's Orthodox, such as fasting, liturgical time, and marital life. These problems must be unanimously resolved by contemporary world Orthodoxy, and not unilaterally by the local churches. The heresies connected with these problems in today's Orthodoxy demand the attention of the Church gathered in a Council.

The reason for "rushing" into a Council was given in Geneva by the Chairman of the First Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference, Metropolitan Meliton: "It is important for the Church to rediscover the institution of Councils, and taste their value again. After we do this, we will realize how imperative it is to convene this age-old institution, the Council, whenever the need may arise." Such

was his response to a journalist's question, "Why a Council now?" at the conclusion of the First Pre-Synodal Conference in Cham-besy in November, 1976.

With regard to the question of the composition of the Council, it is presumptuous to foretell what this composition will be, because nothing has been decided at this point. It is also presumptuous to speculate on the procedure of the future Council, for example, the question of who will or will not have voting privileges. All this is yet to be agreed upon by the sister Orthodox churches.

Moreover, it is preposterous to predict and prejudge the outcome of the Council, since it is obviously impossible to foresee the Church's response to the workings of the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit has spoken through the Council, that same Spirit will bear witness to the Council's veracity in the conscience of the Church. If the Spirit has not spoken through the Council, the Spirit of Truth will not bear this witness, and the Council will not be received by the life of the Church as a true Council. Yet, this can be determined only *post-factum*, and never *a priori*!

As far as the "neo-papist" intentions of Moscow and Constanti-nople are concerned, I believe that Father Popovich exaggerates a great deal the existence of such intentions. One of the local churches, the church which has been given priority among the other churches, the church which has been given the charisma to "reside in love,"<sup>5</sup> should take the lead in resolving common problems within world Orthodoxy. One of the churches should coordinate a common Orthodox response to today's questions. One of the churches should guarantee a common Orthodox witness and presence in today's world. This charisma has been granted to Constantinople by the life of the Church, and can eventually be given in a second place to the Holy Church of Russia, in spite of the state of persecution to which this church is subjected. To accuse these two churches of "neo-papism" for accepting their responsibility as leading churches in today's world Orthodoxy seems to me quite unwarranted! Of course, political factors have always interfered with church affairs. This was true even during the times of the Holy Byzantine and Holy Russian Empires. In spite of this, the Church has managed not only to survive, but to thrive even through persecution. In this regard we should trust the Lord, who promised us that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church.<sup>6</sup>

The foremost question which is raised by Father Popovich's remarks is whether a Council is indeed possible today. To this question we can respond with an unconditional "yes"! Councils are always possible, and in fact even necessary. Yet, the Councils of today and of the future should follow the patterns established by the great tradition of the Church's Councils, thereby continuing to express the conciliarity of the Church.

Conciliarity (*synodikotes, sobornost*) is inherent in the nature of the Church.<sup>7</sup> Since the Church is a communion and a community of persons chosen by God to be His people, the Church is by nature a council, an image and reflection of the 'council' of the Holy Trinity, which is a unity and community of persons. It is impossible for the Church not to express this conciliarity. Councils have always existed and will continue to function on the parish, diocesan, and regional levels as well as on the level of an autocephalous church.

In view of the preparation of the Great and Holy Council of the Eastern Orthodox Church, conciliarity is still a burning issue in our times. In the early church, conciliarity was a permanent ecclesiastical element. It cannot be otherwise today, in spite of problems and issues which challenge this conciliarity. Among these issues we may include the need for contemporary Orthodox thought to "liberate itself from the idea that a Council—whether 'ecumenical' or not—possesses a legally automatic infallibility."<sup>8</sup> Equally important are the issues raised by the dialogue with the Non-Chalcedonians and by the Orthodox involvement in the ecumenical situation of divided Christendom. Whatever the problems of contemporary conciliarity of the Church, there is hope that the Holy Spirit of God will lead the Church to resolve these problems. Acting in faith, we, the Orthodox Church of today, must face the challenge of conciliarity.

In conclusion, therefore, I cannot share the overall pessimism of Father Popovich and cannot subscribe to his prophesy of doom that the end-result of the Council would be "only schisms, heresies, and the loss of many souls." The outcome depends on how the churches utilize this Council and to what degree they allow the Spirit to speak through the Council. These are responsibilities which belong not only to the bishops gathered in council, but also to the entire people of God. Now is the time for committed Orthodox Christians to express themselves on the issues presented on the ten-item agenda of the Council. A *consensus* should be

reached even before the Council, expressing the consciousness of today's Orthodoxy as enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God. The success of the Council will depend on the accuracy of this expression. Yet, let us not have any misgivings with regard to the outcome of this Council. Our duty as Christians is to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We must let Him guide us in expressing through an ecumenical or pan-Orthodox Council the voice of the Church on issues facing today's communicants.

#### NOTES

1. Justin Popovich, "On the Summoning of the 'Great Council' of the Orthodox Church," *Orthodox Life*, 1 (1978), pp. 37-40.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
5. Saint Ignatios of Antioch, *Letter to the Corinthians*.
6. Mt. 16.18.
7. For a full treatment of the principle of conciliarity and the historical background of the Councils, see my article "Facts, Doctrine, and Theology Pertaining to the Councils: Some Propositions for Discussion," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 24 (1979), 1-11.
8. J. Meyendorff, "What is an Ecumenical Council?" in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Theological Quarterly*, 17 (1973), p. 270.



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*CONSTANTINE CA VARNOS*

## **A THEOLOGICAL APOLOGIA FOR THE FORTHCOMING GREAT AND HOLY SYNOD: A RESPONSE**

As a respondent to Bishop Maximos' paper, I find his Theological Apologia for the forthcoming Great and Holy Synod very clear and one with which I am in basic agreement. What I shall say, therefore, will not be in the nature of criticism, but of suggestions and comments on certain points of his Apologia.

My first suggestion is that the term *synod* replace the term *council*. His Grace used throughout his paper – with few exceptions – the term council instead of synod. Among the statements where he uses the term synod is the following one: “It is certain that the future Great and Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church will be a synod of bishops only, according to the traditional system.” His Grace is not alone in the tendency to use the term council instead of synod. He is following the general trend among those who speak of the Great and Holy Synod in the English language. Father Kallistos Ware, who lectured on this subject in this very auditorium some months ago, similarly spoke of a council instead of a synod; and so do other Orthodox theologians in this country and elsewhere who employ the English language. Those who use the Greek language, never speak of a council or concilium. The word concilium is never used in Orthodox discussion about synods where the Greek language is employed, or, so far as I know, where the Slavic languages are used. The synod, which is the anglicized form of *synodos*, is one that appears in all English-language dictionaries. Hence, in suggesting its use instead of that of council, I am not suggesting the adoption of a novel term.

The reason why I think the term synod is to be preferred by the Orthodox is that the Orthodox institution of a synod is not the same as the Western institution of a Council. The Latins very legitimately and properly use the term council, which is the anglicized form of the Latin concilium. In the Orthodox Church, as Bishop Maximos rightly observes, “Councils [i.e., synods], and especially ecumenical councils, represent *the supreme authority* of the Church.” This is not true, however, of the Roman Catholic Church. In the latter, one of the bishops, the Bishop of Rome, the

Pope, is the supreme authority of the Church. Councils in the Latin Church make recommendations on various matters, but it is the Bishop of Rome who decides which of these recommendations are to be adopted and which are to be rejected; the consensus of the council is not binding. In the Western Church, the infallibility of what is adopted comes from the Pope, whereas in the Orthodox Church, as his Grace remarks, “the infallibility comes to them from the Church, *ex consensu ecclesiae*,” which means, as he elsewhere puts it, from the *Laos Theou*, that is, from the faithful Orthodox Christians, who are the conscience of the Church. This being so, to avoid any confusion about the nature of the Synod either among the Orthodox, or among others throughout the world, who read the preparations for the forthcoming Synod, and who will be following its course when it finally takes place, I think it is highly desirable for the Orthodox to use the term Synod, instead of the term council.

Use of the consecrated Patristic Orthodox term synod will not only help us avoid a misunderstanding about the character of the forthcoming Synod, but will also help us become and remain conscious of the fact that by its very nature the Synod will have for us Orthodox importance far surpassing the importance which the recent Vatican Council had or will have for the Roman Catholics.

These remarks lead me to the second point I would like to make. Bishop Maximos did well to take into serious consideration the memorandum of the venerable Serbian theologian Archimandrite Justin Popovich, entitled *On the Summoning of the 'Great Synod' of the Orthodox Church*. This memorandum has been translated into several languages, French, Russian, and Greek, besides English, and has had a significant impact on many Orthodox Christians. The chief feature of Father Justin's memorandum is that it calls for great caution, the avoidance of haste, in the preparation of the Great and Holy Synod. Some feel that Father Popovich goes too far in some of the things he says. Thus, his memorandum not only calls for caution, but strikes a note of great fear. He says: “Should this Synod, God forbid, actually come to pass, only one kind of result can be expected from it: schisms, heresies, and the loss of many souls.” Bishop Maximos quotes this statement, expresses the opinion that it is to be regarded as a call to caution, and notes that he does not share Father Justin's pessimism about the outcome of the forthcoming Synod. I feel that Father Popovich goes too far when he predicts that “only one kind of result

can be expected from it: schisms, heresies, and the loss of many souls."

I submit that we can expect such an outcome only if due caution is not observed by those who are making the preparations. Haste may well be expected to have the results which Father Justin Popovich predicts. For the topics to be discussed are many: ten. In the past, *only one or two* major topics were discussed in such Synods. With a much larger list of major items to be considered, far more time will be needed for the proper preparations of the Synod than was required in the case of the Seven Ecumenical Synods. Another reason why it is necessary to avoid haste in the preparations for the Great and Holy Synod is the small number of eminent theologians among the Orthodox. The advice of these theologians, after they have been given ample time to investigate the various problems which they have been asked to consider, is absolutely necessary. They should not be pressed to give a quick report, especially if they are advanced in years, as are, for instance, Father Georges Florovsky and Professor John Karmires.

Much forethought is needed for such an important event as a Great and Holy Synod. The theologians will provide this, if they are given a chance and sufficient time. If this forethought is not at the disposal of those who are making preparations for the Synod, then results such as those predicted by Father Popovich can be expected. The Orthodox will then have to resort to an enormous amount of afterthought. But afterthought generally cannot undo all the evil that lack of forethought creates. It is much better to be Promethean, in the etymological sense of this term, than to be Epimethean, as the ancient Greek myth so vividly teaches us. (See Plato's *Protagoras*.)

Another point I would like to make is that Father Justin is not the only Orthodox theologian who has stressed caution with regard to the forthcoming Great and Holy Synod. The well-known monk Theokletos Dionysiates, of Mount Athos, struck a note of caution nine years before Father Justin wrote his memorandum to the Synod of the Church of Serbia.<sup>1</sup> If the outcome of the forthcoming Synod is to be good, truly in the sacred Tradition of Orthodoxy, Father Theokletos says, those who are to constitute it must begin with the statement: "following our holy Fathers." They must make their own the spirit, the mind, of the holy Fathers, and follow their God-inspired teaching and the Tradition of the Orthodox Church. But that they will actually

do so is something that is for him very much in question.

Among others, the late Professor Panagiotis Tremperas, also urged caution. Tremperas pointed out the difficulty of invoking a Pan-Orthodox Synod, owing to the great number of topics and the small number of Orthodox theologians who are able to deal with them.<sup>2</sup> These statements were made in 1968, before the number of topics to be discussed was reduced to their present number of ten. But even this number is a large one, as I noted earlier.

Those who are making preparations for the forthcoming Great and Holy Synod will, I hope, take into account all the considerations that I have mentioned, and will see to it that everything that needs to be done for the Pan-Orthodox Synod, if it is to gain the approval of all the faithful, will be done.

I endorse the statement made by Bishop Maximos, “*a consensus* should be reached even before the Synod, expressing the consciousness of today’s Orthodoxy as enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God.” His statement accords well with my own emphasis on the need of forethought, to avoid the necessity of post-synodic corrective afterthought. And this in turn is in accord with the call for avoiding haste.

Finally, addressing myself to Bishop Maximos and Metropolitan Damaskinos, and to the others who are taking part in the preparation of the Synod, I would like in all humility to urge them not to be influenced by those who want the Synod to take place at any early date. In this age of jet-travel, space-conquest, computers, and the like, people have been increasingly conditioned to want to do things fast and to get quick results in every one of their endeavors. But we must realize that when we are dealing with things of the spirit, of religion, we are dealing with another realm altogether, a realm very different from that of matter and technology, with a world which today is for the most part ignored. The realm of the spirit is one in which man must work in close cooperation with God, if he is to achieve anything real. Without the grace of the Holy Spirit, enlightening those who participate in a synod, a synod is not real synod. Now divine grace cannot be acquired by pressing some button or performing some other mechanical operation. It can only be acquired after a long process of multiform spiritual discipline, as the lives of our Saints teach us.

Let us, then, follow the middle path, always recommended by our Holy Fathers, and avoid both undue slowness, on the one

hand, and haste, on the other. Let those who will be taking part in the Great and Holy Pan-Orthodox Synod make sure that they have duly made all the necessary preparations, inner as well as outer, for the actual taking place of a true Holy Synod. And let the rest of us prepare *ourselves*, so that after the Great Synod has taken place we may have the needed inner spiritual vision to discern that it is indeed a true synod, if such it be, inspired by the Holy Spirit. Then the faithful will give it the confirmation that will render it truly Ecumenical, in the traditional Orthodox sense of this term.

#### NOTES

1. See *Orthodoxos Typos*, July, 1968, p. 1.
2. See *Ekklesia*, 1-15 August 1968, p. 357.



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## **SERAPHEIM SURRENCE**

### **A THEOLOGICAL APOLOGIA FOR THE FORTHCOMING GREAT AND HOLY SYNOD: A RESPONSE**

I have two basic reactions to the paper by His Grace the Bishop of Diokleia. One is of gratitude – first for his personal kindness in making certain that I would have ahead of time the substance of the positions he would be taking in his paper. I must say that the portion of his paper on “Facts, Doctrine, and Theology Pertaining to the Councils” is an excellent exposition of the various aspects involved and although Bishop Maximos summarized very well this part of his prepared text, I strongly recommend to all of you that when the complete text is made available, as we have been promised that it will be, you read it carefully and completely.

My second reaction is one of embarrassment – embarrassment because it is well known that in certain circles it is not considered “fashionable” to agree with a bishop on anything, simply as a matter of principle. And I must tell you that I agree almost completely with what Bishop Maximos has had to say. The one relatively minor point that I find myself not in agreement with concerns the makeup of the Great and Holy Synod or Council. It seems to me that based on precedents laid down by the Pan Orthodox Conferences only those local churches recognized as fully canonical can participate in the decision-making of the Council. But that does not preclude churches in the diaspora from attending as observers and even being given the right to explain and detail their position vis-a-vis Ecumenical Orthodoxy.

There is not time to discuss all the points raised by the Serbian Archimandrite Justin Popovich, but a few things must be said. Concerning undue haste in convening the Council, I think this issue was very effectively disposed of by His Eminence Metropolitan Damaskinos in his paper of yesterday afternoon. It is clear that a very well thought out plan for the preparation of the Council has been followed and that everything is being done to ensure that all points of view within Orthodoxy will be given due consideration.

Concerning politics – it has already been demonstrated that all church councils have been involved not only in “ecclesiastical politics” but also – let us say – in a certain amount of “non-ecclesial” politics. This is the reality of the matter and the forthcoming Holy and Great Council will prove to be no exception to the rule. On the other hand, let it be said that in this speaker’s view, the miracle is, with such a great diversity in terms of social and political systems that the various Orthodox Churches find themselves in and with linguistic and cultural divergences as well, that a great amount of mutual understanding and cooperation has already proved possible.

Concerning the 10th Item on the Council Agenda: “peace, freedom, fraternity, and charity among peoples, and the elimination of racial discrimination.” To take just the last item: can we Orthodox here in America deny that racism remains a basic fact of life that continues to tear apart the social fabric of our society? Let me salute SCOBA (the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops) for having organized a meeting in New York City about two years ago in which leading clergy members of the Black community in New York met with representatives of SCOBA to discuss matters of mutual concern. Certainly, no major decisions were reached, but at the very least there was recognition that a problem exists.

Let us face it. The main objections of the ultra-conservatives to the forthcoming Council are not primarily political, but in fact psychological. They fear change. They are afraid if they compromise on the matter of the calendar that they will then have to give in on many other matters; if they agree to any kind of dialogue with non-Orthodox, that participation in the Ecumenical Movement is justified and then where will it all end? All Orthodox are conservative in the best sense of that word – they wish to conserve and preserve what has been handed down to them in Holy Tradition. But Holy Tradition is not something static and lifeless; on the contrary it is something alive and creative.

I want to say just a word about Orthodox unity. Despite what has been said, Orthodox canonical unity is a reality and exists both in this country and all over the world. The fact that it is not obvious to many Orthodox and to most non-Orthodox does not change that fact. It is true, however, that we must do all in our power and strength to make Orthodox unity more obvious and more meaningful, and I believe that discussion of the Orthodox

diaspora, as well as autocephaly and autonomy, by the forthcoming Council should prove to be of great assistance in this respect.

In conclusion it has to be admitted that a number of Orthodox Christians still have certain reservations regarding the forthcoming Holy and Great Council, and therefore I deem it appropriate to conclude my remarks with a citation from the well-known Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky:

If the council, above all a general council, is the most perfect expression of the catholicity of the Church, of her symphonic structure, we are not bound to believe that the infallibility of its judgment is assured solely by the canons which determine its legitimate character as a Council. This is a necessary condition but not a sufficient one: the canons are not a magical recipe that forces catholic truth to express itself. To look for a criterion of Christian Truth in canonical formulas, with the Truth itself, is tantamount to depriving the Truth of its internal evidence. It would make of catholicity an external function, exercised by the hierarchy; it would confine the mark of catholicity with that of the apostolicity of the Church. Nor must we believe that catholic truth is more subservient in its expression to something resembling universal suffrage, to the affirmation of the majority; all the history of the Church witnesses to the contrary. Democracy in this sense is foreign to the Church, a caricature of catholicity. "The Church," Khomiakhov has said, "does not consist in the greater or lesser quantity of her members, but in the spiritual bond that unites them." The internal evidence of the Truth has no place if constraint by a majority or a minority is involved. Catholicity has nothing to do with "common opinion." There is no other criterion of truth than Truth itself. And the Truth is the revelation of the Holy Trinity who gives the Church her catholicity – an ineffable reality of unity and diversity, in the image of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit consubstantial and indivisible. (See *The Image and Likeness of God* (New York, 1974), pp. 180-81.)



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*METROPOLITAN PHILIP SALIBA*

**AN ADDRESS  
TO THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF ORTHODOX THEOLOGIANS**

It gives me great joy to address this assembly and to welcome, on behalf of the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, our distinguished brothers-in-Christ from throughout the world, to this Third International Conference of Orthodox Theologians hosted by the Orthodox Theological Society of America, during its Tenth Anniversary Year.

The topic of your deliberation, "Theological Reflections on the Forthcoming Great Council" is of paramount interest to the American Orthodox community. In my remarks to you this evening, I will not presume to theologize to theologians, neither will I speak in trite platitudes. My message, solicited at the eleventh hour, will be a personal assessment of the possibilities offered by such a Great Council. It will also attempt to offer you candid insights into the contemporary American Orthodox scene to provide you with some small measure of practical knowledge of the Church's situation in this hemisphere and to familiarize you with the aspirations of its faithful.

In November of 1975, I was delighted to learn of the proposed Great Council of Orthodoxy. The last Ecumenical Council was convened in 787, one thousand, one hundred and ninety-one (1,191) years ago, to deal with the problem of iconoclasm. In the nearly twelve centuries which have elapsed since the last Council, many religious, moral, political and socio-economic events have taken place which have deeply affected the life of the Church. One might ask: "Why didn't the Church meet in Council since 787 to courageously respond to these challenges? Has the Church lost that dynamism and responsiveness which characterized her life during the first eight centuries? There is no doubt that the Church has experienced very difficult times since the last Council. However, this does not excuse the stagnation which has marked her life for the past 1,191 years. It is indeed strange that while we are active in the ecumenical movement, attending WCC meetings

in America, Europe, Asia and Africa, we have had very insignificant inter-Orthodox contact on either the national or international levels. When we learned of the forthcoming Great Council, we thanked God that at long last and after many centuries of silence, a Council would convene to respond to the many challenges of our times.

At a 1976 meeting of the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), we hierarchs unanimously authorized the Chairman, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, to contact His Eminence Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, the Chairman of the pre-Synodal consultations, for the purpose of inviting our Conference to participate, in some capacity, in future pre-Synodal consultations. Our request was well received and in a communique addressed to Archbishop Iakovos, dated 4 December 1976, Metropolitan Meliton wrote: "In reply, I wish to inform you and, through you, the Standing Conference, that your petition, being of special significance, will be conveyed to the Church, so that she might define the way by which the participation of our Orthodox brethren in America, in the next pan-Orthodox consultations may be effected, and their voice may be clearly heard." As of this date, to my knowledge, SCOBA has heard nothing.

At the first pre-Synodal Consultation, attended by representatives of thirteen patriarchates and churches, a proposed agenda of ten points was approved for the Great Council. Some of the points on the agenda are important, yet some points are out-dated and irrelevant. Missing from the agenda, for example, are topics of contemporary concern, such as abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, the ordination of women and lesbians to the priesthood, cloning, pro-creation through artificial insemination, test-tube babies, etc. Although the teachings of the Church are clear vis-à-vis some of these issues, the Church must again reaffirm her position, and constantly proclaim the Truth, in order to eliminate any possible confusion or mis-direction on the part of the faithful. I will briefly familiarize you with some of the current pastoral problems which we are facing in this country and in many countries.

### **Abortion**

In January of 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States legalized abortion. Such a decision was a tremendous blow to our Christian ethic and has caused the murder of millions of innocent, unborn children—over 1 million in 1977 alone. Dr. R.A. Gallop wrote:

Once you permit the killing of the unborn child, there will be no stopping. There will be no age limit. You are setting off a chain reaction that will eventually make you the victim. Your children will kill you because you permitted the killing of their brothers and sisters. Your children will kill you because they will not want to support you in your old age. Your children will kill you for your homes and estates. If a doctor will take money for killing the innocent child in the womb, he will kill you with a needle when paid by your children. This is a terrible nightmare you are creating for the future.

### **Euthanasia**

I am not surprised at all by the heated debate which is going on all over the world concerning the legalization of euthanasia. The legalization of abortion in an ever-increasing number of countries, "Christian" countries, will necessarily lead to the legalization of "mercy killing"; for what is the difference between terminating the unwanted life in the womb and an unwanted life in the hospital? Both cases are indicative of the world's growing lack of reverence of life. Russell Chandler, Religious Editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, in an article entitled "The Option of Death: Who May Choose?" wrote:

The sophisticated and thorny problems of abortions, euthanasia, genetic engineering, organ transplantation and test-tube babies were remote—if not unreal—to most clergymen, let alone to the average person. According to experts in the field, the number of persons advocating an individual's right to terminate his or her own life is growing. Others, although not going that far, feel comfortable about passive euthanasia, allowing death to occur by removing medical life supporting systems.

We know that no one has the right to terminate life except the Giver of Life, but we must articulate this belief to a wandering world. Man's creative energy is continuously leading to new discoveries. In other words, what was impossible to medical science in the past, is possible today. Open heart surgery, for example, was unthinkable twenty-five years ago. Now it is a daily practice and I would venture to say that in the past ten years, millions of lives were saved through this operation.

### **Homosexuality**

When a society loses its moral fiber, it falls prey to immorality

and all kinds of perversions. Homosexuality today is openly and widely publicized in the news media; consequently, homosexuals have their clubs, organizations, and even churches. Homosexuality has invaded institutions such as our armed forces and even some Christian denominations, and this invasion continues to increase daily. It is clear that the Old and New Testaments, canon law and Holy Tradition all condemn homosexuality as being abnormal and inconsistent with both God's law and natural law. However, several Christian denominations, some traditionally prestigious among them, have distorted the message of these sources and cause an ever-increasing amount of confusion among the faithful.

### **World Hunger**

The most serious problem which our world is facing today is no longer the threat of nuclear confrontation. It is, rather, mass starvation. An American agronomist recently warned that "unless mankind is wise enough and compassionate enough to design a better food security system, we may be seeing the beginning of the end of our civilization." According to the latest United Nations statistics, the world population is increasing at the rate of ninety-five million people a year. Five hundred million people in Asia, Africa and Latin America are threatened with starvation. In certain provinces of northern India, famished Indians have stripped the trees of all edible leaves, and newspapers throughout the world carry nightmarish reports of entire families who have committed suicide to escape the agony of a slow death by starvation.

There is a new theological trend which is sweeping the Christian world called "Theology of Liberation." We Orthodox have been asked to define our position vis-à-vis this theology. Can the Church remain passive and silent in a world of hunger, racism, totalitarianism, economic exploitation and social injustice? And, if not, can the Church advocate armed resistance and encourage social revolutions as ways and means to liberate oppressed nations? We need, the world needs, answers to this and other new iconoclasms. We cannot merely refer our people to theological libraries to find the answers in the Fathers of the Church. The Church of the twentieth century must speak out against those who would destroy Man, just as the Church of the eighth century spoke out against the heretical iconoclasts.

One of the topics on the agenda of the Great Council which does concern and interest the Orthodox in this hemisphere

very much is the situation of the faithful in diaspora. I wonder, however, how much the venerable hierarchs of the Church in the Old World really know about our Orthodox situation in America. Who will speak for the American Church? I feel that it is imperative to provide our Orthodox brethren from across the ocean with a true and clear picture about our successes and failures, especially during the current century. Our brethren in the Old World must see that Orthodoxy on this continent is no longer a child. Nearly two centuries ago our forefathers, driven by the horrors of tyranny, social injustice and despair, heard the Voice which Abraham heard: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee." Thus, from the Middle East, the Balkans, Russia and Eastern Europe our fathers came and blessed these shores by planting the seeds of the glorious Orthodox Faith, the Faith of the Apostles, the Faith of the Saints and Martyrs. Faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, struggling for their daily bread, these pioneers had the courage and determination to establish in this land religious communities to perpetuate Orthodoxy. Because of their various national backgrounds and strong ethnic ties which connected them with their mother churches, our people found themselves separated from each other, and living under a multiplicity of administrative jurisdictions—a situation unparalleled in the history of the Church. If the first and second generation of Orthodox have tolerated this confusing situation, I assure you that the third and fourth generations will neither understand it nor accept it. The youth, perhaps more than any other age group, know full well the blessings to be derived from a united Church, and constantly reiterate their pleas for action in this direction. If nothing else, the situation of the Church in this country has instructed them in the virtue of patience.

On the occasion of the bicentennial of the American independence, celebrated in 1976, the first pan-Orthodox encyclical was released to the media. It stated, in part, that "The Divine Liturgy was first sung on this continent three decades before the American Revolution by Orthodox pioneers who were swiftly followed by Russian missionaries bringing the Faith of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Byzantium to the native Americans who still cherish it." There can be no doubt that Orthodoxy is deeply rooted in the American soil. We will be forever indebted to our forefathers who planted and nurtured the Church in America, but our mother

churches must realize once and for all that we are no longer a Church of immigrants. Our Orthodox children have died on the battlefields of many wars defending American principles and ideals. Our people have generously contributed to American life in business, education, the arts, science and medicine, law and government. Through them Orthodoxy has found a permanent home in the New World. This fact cannot continue to be ignored.

I have traveled in the Middle East and have walked in the footsteps of the early missionaries; I have visited Greece and have seen the glory of the past centuries; I have visited Russia and was overwhelmed by the piety of the believers. But I can honestly say that despite the glory of the past, Orthodoxy in the New World stands unique in its vigor, vitality and dynamism. If the mother churches are not aware of these special characteristics which distinguish the life of the Church in this hemisphere, we say to them, "come and see." It was in this spirit that I invited His Beatitude Elias IV, Patriarch of Antioch and All the East, to visit his North American Archdiocese. After spending three months in 1977 traveling throughout the United States and Canada, meeting our people and experiencing first-hand the Church in the New World, he stated:

In preparation for the upcoming Great Council, the Antiochian Holy Synod has studied in depth the situation of Orthodoxy in the diaspora. Our position is clear. There must be established independent Churches in Western Europe, in North America, etc. The possibility for such an autocephalous Church is greatest in North America. The Antiochian See is ready to do her part to rectify the unfortunate situation of Orthodoxy in North America. We affirm that in North America there should be an autocephalous Church with its own Patriarch and Holy Synod.

To our other brothers in the Old World we issue the same invitation, "come and see." Yes, come and see our churches and institutions, our liturgical and theological publications, and our theological schools. But even more importantly, come and see our dedicated and faithful clergy, our devoted laity, and our dynamic youth movements.

My brothers and sisters in Christ, I am not suggesting that all is well with Orthodoxy in this hemisphere. We, too, have our problems. But the most cancerous is the administrative disunity which allows us to continue to live in our artificially constructed ghettos. Individually our various jurisdictions have done much. But collectively we have not yet even begun to explore our tremendous

potentialities as one, administratively united body. We Orthodox are fortunate that we represent two thousand years of theology and spirituality. But where is our spiritual impact on the life of America? Who is articulating our Orthodox theology for the benefit of our American brethren who have been victimized and confused by all kinds of theological innovations? Where is our presence in the media? Where is our moral influence on our national and international politics? Orthodoxy, despite her past glories, remains the best kept secret in this land because of our failure to speak with one united voice. America does not understand us because we are still speaking to her in a multitude of languages which she does not understand.

The problem of the diaspora, that tremendous exodus of millions of Orthodox Christians from their "old countries," constitutes a major and unprecedented experience in the history of the Church. The multiplicity of jurisdictions in one given territory contradicts the fundamental understanding and teaching of ecclesiology. No one can deny that we are dealing with a very serious, and a highly complex problem. But it is a problem which must be faced. Nine years ago His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, stated in response to a question about Orthodox unity in America: "The problem is not simple. But the simple thing is this, that we are not going back. We are going forward. Our relations with the mother churches will be severed unless the mother churches realize the American reality." It is the earnest prayer of six million Orthodox Christians throughout this land, that this "realization" will be accomplished as a result of the forthcoming Great Council.

My own suggestion as a first step in the achievement of administrative unity in America would be for the mother Churches to elevate the Standing Conference—which has already served its purpose—to the dignity of a Synod. Such a Synod will be able to speak to America and to the world with one voice and one accord. This Synod, which will truly represent six million free Orthodox Christian believers, will be able to effectively respond to the moral and social challenges of our time. Why should we, for example, issue ten Orthodox statements vis-à-vis abortion?

The most important task for this Synod, however, will be the preparation for the establishment of an Orthodox Patriarchate in America, which will reflect both our organic unity and the richness and diversity of our ethnic cultures. I want to make it clear here that, due to the uniqueness of the North American situation,

this Patriarchate can only be established by a common decision of all Orthodox Churches.

If this proposal is not Orthodox, I do not know what is. Orthodoxy in America must not be permitted to be victimized by historical feuding and comfortable inaction. The mission of the Church is to recreate life and constantly transform history. How long can our mother churches continue to ignore the destiny and fulfillment of millions of Orthodox Christians in North America? It is not enough to romanticize the past and bask in the glory of by-gone centuries. “For yesterday is already a dream, and tomorrow is only a vision, but today well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope.”



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and moving content. Indeed, Stratis Myrivilis is the great craftsman of modern Greek prose. No other modern Greek prose-writer has worked out his style so artistically as Myrivilis did. On the other hand, the dominant element in all his work is love for life, love for man and love for nature. This all embracing feeling permeates his work deeply and becomes even stronger through his perfect literary workmanship. No wonder, then, that Myrivilis' books, *Life in the Tomb* in particular, have known exceptional success in Greece.

Before the present translation, two other novels of Myrivilis were translated into English by other translators, *The Mermaid Madonna* (1959) and *The Schoolmistress with the Golden Eyes* (1964). Professor Peter Bien's translation of *Life in the Tomb* is an excellent rendition of the original: it is accurate, faithful and highly readable. It was made from the Greek edition of 1955 collated with that of 1930. In his Preface (pp. xi-xix) Bien presents a short account of the historical events of the novel and their geographical locations, stressing their trueness and accuracy by referring to books on history of the "Macedonian Front" written by competent military men, diplomats and historians. He even adds at the end of the book three maps showing Greece and Environs, Mytilene, and The Front, although *Life in the Tomb* is not a work of historiography—truthful though it may be—but a novel, a free creation of imagination based on facts. Very helpful also is an explanatory index of "Terms and References" (pp. xv-xix).

Costas M. Proussis  
Hellenic College

*Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue.* By Kallistos Ware and Colin Davey, eds. London, 1977. Pp. v-99.

This study, prepared by two authorities on Anglican-Orthodox relations, the Orthodox Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and the Anglican Presbyter Colin Davey, has the subtitle: "The Moscow Statement Agreed by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission 1976 with Introductory Supporting Material." It somehow completes the two former basic writings, Methodios Fouyas' *Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism* and Vasil T. Istavridis' *Orthodoxy and Anglicanism*.

Beginning with a preface by the Co-chairmen, the Rt. Rev. Robert Runcie, Bishop of St. Albans, and the Most Rev. Athenagoras, Archbishop of Thyaeteira and Great Britain, this new work includes chapters on the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue 1920-1976 by the Rev. Colin Davey, the Moscow Conference Communiqué, the Moscow Conference 1976, by Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, the Moscow Agreed Statement, and the Thessalonike Meeting 1977.

The two co-chairmen, speaking on the Moscow Conference and the Agreed Statement, are of the opinion that these "constitute a real advance

on earlier stages in the dialogue." Both men keenly state that "this formulation carries only the authority of the Commission which produced it."

Colin Davey, writing in a strictly historical and condensed form, says that "the aim of the present paper is to give a sufficient account of the official contacts and conversations between Anglicans and Orthodox from 1920 onwards."

The theological conversations which began in 1920 form the background and have prepared the way for the beginning of their newer and later phase from 1960. The visit of Dr. Michael Ramsey, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, in the spring of 1962 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate opened "a new chapter in Anglican-Orthodox relations." The context and the climate of the 1960's were very different from the inter-war period. Presently, the conversations have been entrusted upon a new generation of theologians of the two Churches.

A second paper of similar length and quality is the one written by Kallistos Ware, who describes and analyzes in an objective and positive way the Moscow Conference.

Vasil T. Istavridis

ΠΑΤΡΟΛΟΓΙΑ, Τόμος Α', Εισαγωγή, Β' και Γ' Αιώνας. By Stylianos G. Papadopoulos. Athens, 1977. Pp. 503.

Professor Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, who succeeded Constantine Bonis in the School of Theology, University of Athens, began his academic career publishing his textbook on patrology, which when completed will be more than one volume. The first volume includes the introduction and the study of the Fathers of the first and second centuries.

University students and young theologians gave Professor Papadopoulos the impetus for writing the manual on patrology. In this textbook he tries to understand, to evaluate, and to formulate the personal theological offering of every Father, which when adopted by the Church becomes its Tradition.

Generally speaking, the style of the book appears to be sober and natural, while on many occasions the writer tends to become enthusiastic. The author follows the strict historical and chronological method of presenting his material, which includes every father, teacher, and author of the Church. There are no special chapters or introductions to patristic epochs and schools of thought, or other subdivisions. Those can be found either in the General Introduction or in the first Father of the Church who happens to be connected to those subdivisions. According to the author, "Patrology does not have any limits in history, as it is the case with Church Tradition."

Vasil T. Istavridis



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**CHURCH AS COSMOS:  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONTINUITY  
OF RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR**

**Placing the Argument**

When the phenomenological and anthropological aspects of the religious life are exposed, a Christian is at once put into the hazardous position of seeing Christianity as "just another religion." There are two approaches which one can take when this danger approaches. One can first close his eyes and wish to see nothing which existed before Christianity, except of course that which is found in the Old Testament. For this approach, the Scripture is the *principium unicum*, the only source of theology. This approach can be limited, negative, and bathed in the fear of which many empirical thinkers have accused the Church. The other approach is to see that there were men before Christ and outside Christian Scripture who were groping for unity with the supernatural. To be sure, when we admit this, we then admit that the whole history of Israel was a way, the particular way, the chosen way through the chosen people, that God Himself entered into the history of humankind. But what about those who existed before and outside of God's self-revelation in the Testaments? Do they have nothing in common with Christians? Surely there was a revelation of a sort, albeit only through the world and before the "fullness of time."

One can understand why the Church believes that Christ is, first of all, God revealing Himself, as Himself, through the kenotic process in the Incarnation. All that God revealed in the general 'forms' of revelation to man outside the Scripture (and also within the specific history of Scripture) is now "filled" with the revelation of His Son. Thus, unlike all previous revelations of God, the Incarnation is unique in its redemptive power which saves man and brings him back to God: "No one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6), and "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (14:9). All this is true because it is history, and one can therefore see the danger of separating the Christ-event from history. In fact, without this historicity, any of the other 'religions' can be juxtaposed with Christianity.

The hope of this inquiry is to advance an approach which is both ‘open-eyed’ and Christian. This approach does not deny that Christ is the Redeemer, the True Salvation and Life. Nor does it deny that Christ is God revealing Himself (“one essence with the Father”) as the very culmination of all previous revelations in which men saw some things ‘about’ God through their world. In Christ man knows God Himself and not only ‘about’ God. Nor does this approach deny that the primitive man, in his quest for the supernatural, was quite foolish in his worship of many gods. Finally, this ‘open-eyed’ approach does not purport that Christianity is merely a syncretism of these many religious systems. The only contention is this: there is an anthropological thread of continuity of form in every man who is religious, and that the full form of all revelations is Jesus Christ. As the Akathistos service says of Christ: “Then was the type (*τύπος*), now [He] is the fulfillment.”

### **Man as Religious Being**

The understanding of man’s place in the cosmos is based on three presuppositions: first, man’s acknowledgement of the existence of “that which is sacred”; secondly, the observation that all men, albeit sometimes subconsciously, are beings who live within this framework; and finally, that every man is religious—the *homo religiosus* of which Mircea Eliade and others speak.

There have been many schools of thought that ask why man is religious. The atheist Sigmund Freud, for example, advocated that religion has its origin in man’s helplessness in confronting both the forces of nature outside and the instinctive forces within himself. Freud proposed that man uses religion as an “illusion” when he is not yet ready to use his reason to deal with these forces; religion to him is a negative mechanism, a ‘counter-affect’ which controls or suppresses the irrational. On the other hand, C.G. Jung believed that man is religious because the sacred ‘seizes’ the human subject who is always its victim rather than its creator. For Jung the unconscious is religious; it is that power which ‘seizes’ us, is beyond our control, and intrudes upon our minds. Despite the fact that he remains far from the total truth, religion to Jung is a positive force.

Of course, Freud and Jung present only two of the many possible formulations, but many others who ask this ‘why’ question take positions similar to these. For example, John Dewey

and John Macmurray, like Freud, stress the difference between the rational and irrational, thus hoping to show that religion is the 'illusionary.' On the other hand, William James, in pointing to the fact that man is moved by 'external powers,' and in comparing the unconscious to the theologian's concept of God, sounds much like Jung. Then, too, Rudolf Otto in his *Das Heilige (The Idea of the Holy)* speaks of man's religiosity much as Jung does. I mention these theories on the religious nature of man not because they merit discussion *per se*; this is not the task, and certainly Scripture and the Fathers reveal why man is religious. Rather, I mention these theories to demonstrate from the outset that even such antithetical hypotheses do not deny that religion is an existential force in man's life.

This means that man does not and cannot exist normally within and only by himself; he knows that there is power transcendent to himself. Moreover, it means that man not only 'thinks,' but 'feels' and 'acts' in the process of living and worshipping. This last point is important because it emphasizes the belief that as a psycho-physical being, man uses both body and soul in striving to experience unity in all the spheres of the cosmos. Eric Fromm succinctly makes the point: "The question is not religion or not, but which kind of religion."<sup>1</sup>

### **Man as Psycho-Physical Being**

Man's nature as psycho-physical must first be considered. Why is man, both primitive and Christian, necessarily desirous of using body as well as soul in his worship? It is indeed unfortunate that the Christian often misses the real understanding of why he also worships with his body. The primitive man had no such problem; there was no worship without bodily action. The greatest example that comes to mind is the entrance of the primitive man's body into a womb-shaped grave in the earth, an act which took place during primitive initiatory rites. As we shall see, however, the contemporary Christian has too often been conditioned by the hellenistic philosophy regarding the relationship of the body and soul. The Christian may worship with his body, that is, he kneels, bows his head, etc., but only because the congregation with which he is worshipping does so. His reasons for these actions are not based on the Christian understanding of the intrinsic relationship between soul and body.

In order to see the point most clearly, one could look at the

average Christian's concept of death: often Christians understand death simply as an escape of the soul from the body. For the ancient Greek mind, death was a liberation in the Platonic sense, i.e., a 'return' to the primordial spiritual dimension. For the Christian, however, death is a catastrophe, the catastrophe, the 'last enemy,' a frustration of human existence. Man cannot be only a soul. Man cannot be only a body. Man as a living entity is a unity of both body and soul, and only then does he partake in the fullness of what we know as 'human existence.' The ancient Greeks believed that the soul was imprisoned in the body, and death was a normal release. This same belief is found in some Far-Eastern religions. But for the Christian, death is not a normal end of human existence; it is at once abnormal and a failure. The death of man is "the wages of sin" (Rom. 6:23) since the Fall of Adam. Indeed, for the Christian, when the organic wholeness of man's psycho-physical nature is destroyed in death, the body becomes simply a corpse, dead to life. This is the death of *man himself*, the end of his existence as a man. That a dead man is not fully human is seen in the Orthodox funeral service when the hymn of St. John the Damascene is chanted: "I weep and I wail when I think upon death, and behold our beauty, fashioned after the image of God, lying in the tomb disfigured, dishonored, bereft of form." One feels that frustration that St. John is expressing, not over the death of the body, but over the death of man himself. Thus he speaks about the 'image' of God—the body and soul *together* being created in the 'image'—secured and adjusted to each other, and existing in one being, which in death is 'disfigured,' 'dishonored,' indeed, 'split' in its form.

### **Homo Religiosus**

In considering the act of worship, a fundamental anthropological law which leads to its natural and thus spiritual end (for natural is spiritual in the writings of the Greek Fathers), is that the soul and the body exercise a reciprocal or mutually interactive influence on each other. There is no movement of the body (above the reflex stage) that does not produce its corresponding mental and emotional correlate. In the same way, there is no internal feeling that does not seek to find its expression through some physical channel. All together, physical, emotional, psychical, etc., make up what the Fathers know as *πνευματικός—spiritual*; spiritual referred *not* to a category (as opposed to material), but to

everything that man could become *ἐν δυνάμει* (potentially).

But it does not only begin as most worshippers think, *from* the psychical and emotional to the physical: one's body can and does influence the soul, and primitive man knew it better than we. Our thinking that the whole man is moved only when the emotion is the initiator for the body, must be re-considered. The opposite is seldom understood by contemporary Christians. Today one often hears a young person saying, for example, that he does not want to attend the Liturgy unless he is 'spiritually' moved; perhaps our approach and explanation regarding Orthodox spirituality and worship should be corrected. The flow of influence may *begin* with the body. For example, for an Orthodox Christian, the sign of the cross, the bowing of the body, the kissing of the icon, may arouse in him the desired spiritual attitude of humility. The reason for the induction of spiritual states from bodily movements lies deep within the phylogenetic development of the race. Every school of religious anthropology knows it. It may, indeed, be the first line of religious continuity that we share with our ancestors.

We cannot disregard the intimate relations between the emotions (which, while not constituting a 'spiritual' condition of worship, contributed to the wholeness of the worshipper) and the reaction of the motor nervous system. William James spends much time on this, and while avoiding his extreme view that an external bodily movement constitutes an emotion itself, there is an important truth to be found here. An example of that truth is the fact that the performance of physical acts which have usually been associated with definite emotion will generally be instrumental in arousing the emotional state. For example, if a person who is engaged in a friendly argument suddenly assumes a belligerent facial expression, speaks in loud tones, and waves his arms, he will be surprised to discover that his previous mental tranquility has been taken away even without his real control. His consciousness is now shot through with thrusts of angry emotions, so strong was the influence of his physical movements upon the emotions.

It is true, then, that the rite, the liturgical expression and act, is not merely an unimportant or magical act; it arouses the spiritual correlates, which are comprised of all which man is and are part of the *ὅλος*, the 'whole' person. The whole person is moved not so much by the intellectual perception and rationalization, nor by emotional 'state.' Rather, his spiritual capacity is whipped into vigorous action by the driving force of various physical and ritual

acts. The primitive knew this, and it still lies at the bottom of Orthodox worship.

The Liturgy then, the experiencing of Christ and the joy of the resurrection, also unveils the anthropological truth that James insisted upon for *homo religiosus*: that the movement of certain external and physical actions is closely correlated with the setting up of corresponding interior and spiritual reverberations in the psycho-physical being.

The primitive man, like the contemporary Christian, no doubt thought little about the 'use' of his body in worship; he simply used his body with the supposition that it was the normal thing to do. We most likely do this today also. The continuity here is the *fact* itself, that is, that man *ipso facto* desires to use his soul *and* his body in worshipping as a psycho-physical being in his cosmos.

#### **Cosmos from the Sacred: The Problem of Space and Time**

Before the discussion concerning how man lives and worships in his cosmos can continue, the understanding of what 'cosmos' means must be established. For religious man, cosmos is at once 'sacred' and 'order,' the opposite of 'profane' and 'chaos.' Certainly much more has been written about the nature of 'sacred and profane' than can be discussed here. Important to be mentioned, however, is that they are immediately different and opposite; the sacred is powerful because it organizes and has form in space and time, while the profane is weak because it is chaotic, qualitatively homogeneous, and 'scattered' in space and time. One cannot simply measure space if it remains homogeneous in quality; he must at once know *from* where to begin to measure and *to* where he wishes to measure. For the primitive man, as shall be explained later, the sacred stone or tree placed in the center of his village, might be that from which to measure. It is not just that he was worshipping the stone or tree; to him these objects around which he organized his space, were hierophanies; they expressed for him that which shows itself to be sacred. The sacred ordered his space.

For Christians, of course, the ultimate and historic hierophany is the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. That man looked for the hierophany as a form of seeing the sacred eruption into the world, is now fulfilled absolutely. The form itself is the continuity, and God fulfilled that form for which man was left groping since the fall. It would therefore be the height of naiveté to believe that there can be an equating of the sacrality of Christ with a stone or

tree. Once again, the human cognition was prepared for the Incarnation of Christ through man's search for the eruption of the sacred. That the whole history of Israel reflects this historic preparation is self-evident, but we shall not enter into the specific line of expectation in this paper; it is a job more suited for the exegete. The only point to be made concerning the church of the Old Testament is that it was clearly a period of messianic expectation, the time of search for the final hierophany through various covenants and prophecies. Father Georges Florovsky succinctly made the point: "It is not only the prophets that prophesy. Events also become prophecies. The Old Testament history as a whole is a kind of forgiven image, an historical symbol, a looking forward towards approaching events."<sup>2</sup>

In terms of space another very important point must be made concerning the 'sacred and profane' of the cosmos. These are modes of being which have been assumed by man, just because there is religion. The entrance of Christ into the world, of course, should have ended the very need for religion, and thus the distinction between the 'sacred and profane.' As Alexander Schmemann rightly states in *Orthodoxy and Sacraments*, religion is "the wall of separation between God and man. But Christ who is both God and man has broken down the wall . . . has inaugurated a new life, not a new religion."<sup>3</sup> Despite this fact, however, 'sacred and profane' exist as modalities because one still feels that there is a certain 'tension' in the world, a tension between the 'should' for which Christ came and the 'is' that the devil created in the world with man's agreement. It is the devil and his evil in the world which man chooses to follow that put man in the predicament of earthly mortality, even though he was created in the image of God and destined from the beginning for life and union with God. "I am an image of thy glory ineffable, though I bear the brands of transgressions" is the chant of John the Damascene from the Orthodox funeral. The "brands of transgression" are the grim and sad realities, the profanity (that is, death) of the initial creation expressed in the "image of God"; man's choice and transgression introduced the profane when he refused to be what he was intended to be. Adam refused his 'vocation.'

Christ, to be sure, came to recreate the paradisal situation, to make the whole world 'eucharistic,' as Schmemann writes. But, as we are also told, the world rejected Christ; the world then, not God, created by its rejection the profane condition. "He was in

the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not" (John 1:10). Thus, man is still trapped in these modes, or better, still has a choice between them. As Schmemann says, therefore, existentially the Liturgy begins as a real separation from the world, i.e. the sacred from the profane.<sup>4</sup> In a like manner, when the Cherubic Hymn says: "Let us cast off all earthly cares," it seems to be speaking of this difference.

Father Florovsky also speaks of this separation when he refers to the Church not as a refuge or shelter, but as a "sacred oasis." He says: "In the midst of human fall and ruin a sacred oasis is erected by God. The Church is also an oasis still, set apart, though not taken out of the world. For again the oasis is not a refuge or shelter only but rather a citadel, a vanguard of God."<sup>5</sup>

Thus, even if one refuses to accept such a clearly defined line between sacred and profane, he can still see that the Church, as sacred, allows man to see how things were 'meant to be' when God and man were one in paradise. In this way, one can say that things, as they were meant to be and things as they unfortunately are represent different 'modes,' the sacred and profane. The Church, because of this, is understood as that sacred eruption of space into the profane world; she remains 'detached' and yet paradoxically gives true meaning to her surrounding milieu. This means that the Church is that which brings order, or cosmos, to the world of the religious man. The Church, then, is that point of orientation, the point where the sacred and the profane are gathered in the same place. The Church is therefore that meeting place of the sacred and profane which makes the cosmos both livable and 'real.'

Without this ordering of space and time around the sacred eruption, religious man is left in a world in which he cannot 'measure'; the world is neutral and has no beginning or ending points from which man can measure the various facets of his life. (Think of the various liturgical cycles which give measure to the Christian's life.) We can refer to this understanding of religious man, but with a certain conviction that beneath every situation, no matter how desacralized man may seem, there is a particular sense of sacred order in his life. To be sure, modern man may not realize that his life revolves around sacred space and time, but as evidence clearly shows, it does, if only subconsciously. Such traces of this underlying sense of the 'sacred' are even seen in every seemingly 'secular' day, e.g. the celebration of New Year or the Mardi Gras as formulation of time order or cycle. Another

immediate example is the religious use of the place where one lives, where one eats, where one dies, as formulation of spatial order; both instances show a sense of being sacred, and are indicative of a primal continuity in man's nature.

A greater explanation of cosmos will not be given here; the point to be made is that cosmos is that order shaped around the sacred. It is this which gives to man a construct in which to live and worship.

### **Man's Position and Organizing the Cosmos**

It is because man is finite in his cosmos that two suppositions can be drawn regarding his relation both to that cosmos and its Creator. The first is that he stands in wonderment over the 'order' of things, that is, he marvels at the existence of the cosmos. This is not only wonderment over the function or nature of things *in* the world, but rather the fact that there *is* a world as it is. He may, however, use the function of the nature of things, as he often has, to express this greater and all-encompassing wonderment that there is a world. The other supposition stems directly from the very meaning of 'finite,' that is, that there is an anxiety inseparable from the finite condition which, in turn, leaves man with a vulnerability to all kinds of sufferings and adversities. He has a yearning to exceed his limitation; above all, he aspires to the ways in which death can be defeated. The Infinite, the Deathless—the Creator—is needed.

Understanding these two points, that is, that religious man lives in a cosmos which is built around the eruption of the sacred into the profane, and that his condition (even if not completely conscious) is finite, (both showing a certain continuity of all men), we can now take a more specific approach in demonstrating how the *physical* Church is that cosmos which relates to how man positions himself. Being more informed in the Orthodox Church, of course, our hope is to show that she lends herself to observing further this anthropological continuity.

But before developing these elements of continuity, it must first be established that there is also a danger of exaggeration. This is so because there is a discontinuity also, a set of beliefs and traditions which remain to Orthodox Christianity, *sui generis* in nature. The concern here, however, will be more in observing those elements in which this continuity of behavior can be observed. Sergius Bulgakov says best what we mean: "And even

in the darkness of paganism, in the natural seeking of the soul for its god, there existed a 'pagan sterile church' . . . [which] attained the fullness of its existence only with the Incarnation."<sup>6</sup>

We have considered what a cosmos is; now we must consider how it is created. For the primitive, to settle area, to inhabit a space, i.e. to bring it to order, was to create a cosmos. When this inhabitation occurred, man created a *cosmogony*, that is, he re-created the work of the gods which they did at the beginning of time. This means, in fact, to recreate the world as it was before it fell into profanity. For the archaic man, this re-creation by the inhabitation of the *terra incognita*, constituted a decidedly religious decision. This is true because uninhabited space is not even part of the world; everything that is not 'our world' is not yet 'world.' We can see this strong correlate between sacredness and inhabitation by observing the great fear of the uninhabited world:

His terror of the chaos that surrounds his inhabited world corresponds to the terror of *nothingness*. The unknown space that extends beyond his world—an uncosmized because unconsecrated space, a more amorphous extent into which no orientation has yet been projected . . . for religious man, this profane space represents absolute nothingness.<sup>7</sup>

If the primitive should wander into the uninhabited space, then, he would lose his sense of being; in fact, it has been found that he would often die, feeling that he was dissolved in chaos.<sup>8</sup>

The primitive man, therefore, will not just 'organize'; he will organize it as it was *ab origine*, in the beginning. This is both what the supernatural wanted from him, and what was needed for him to be what he was. This he did through the rites which describe the myths of the beginning of creation. We must, therefore, briefly consider the value of such myth and ritual for him.

### Myth from Reality

It was through the 'living' of the myth that man brought order and, therefore, created his *cosmos*. It was precisely through this cosmogonic myth that he created the world as it was meant to be in the beginning. 'Living the myth' implies a genuine 'religious experience' since it differs from the ordinary experience of everyday life. The 'religiousness' of this experience is due to the fact that one re-enacts the exalting and significant events of the beginning; he once again witnesses the creative deeds of the gods.

One ceases to exist in the everyday world and enters a transfigured and auroral world impregnated with the gods' presence. He is not living in chronological time, but in primordial time, the time when the event first took place.

That this is the real value of myth is shown most clearly by Bronislav Malinowski in his *Myth in Primitive Psychology* where he states that myth is not an idle tale, but an active force;

... not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom. . . . These stories . . . are to the native a statement of primeval, greater, and more relevant reality, by which the present life, fates and activities of mankind are determined, the knowledge of which supplies man with the motive for ritual and moral action, as well as with indications as to how to perform them.<sup>9</sup>

One cannot help but note that modern man and especially the Christian who knows that history is the crucial aspect, emotes great anxiety when the word 'myth' is used. But a 'myth' may be a *true* story, and although in secular terms this may seem to be a contradiction of terms, what is meant is this: myth is correct when the 'historical' reality is correct; this is crucial for the Christian. For example, Paul Tillich in his *Dynamics of Faith* speaks much of symbols and myths in terms of demythologization." While not agreeing with his apparent rejection of the personal character of God, (he prefers to speak of God in the most un-Orthodox and impersonalistic terms of "Ultimate Being"), his point concerning the difference between Christian mythology and primitive mythology is a good one.

One more question arises, namely, whether myths are able to express every kind of ultimate concern. For example, Christian theologians argue that the word 'myth' should be reserved for natural myths in which repetitive, natural processes, such as the seasons, are understood in their ultimate meaning. They believe that if the world is seen as a historical process with beginning, end and center, as in Christianity and Judaism, the term 'myth' should not be used. This would radically reduce the realm in which the term would be applicable. . . . Yet history proves that there are not only natural myths but also *historical* myths . . . Christianity is superior to those religions which are bound to a natural myth.<sup>10</sup>

When 'myth' describes the deeper reality, it may in fact be a great educational process. For a Christian, Christ is reality and all

that we know of him via the stories in the Scripture have value because of it. How many other stories, not included in the canon of the Bible, or true myths express a reality about the life of Christ?

A correlate may be drawn in order to make this point. Just as much attention has been paid to the relationship of myth to ritual, e.g. Radcliffe-Brown in his special study *The Andaman Islanders* or Chapple and Coon in their provocative book *Principles of Anthropology*. In a similar way, for Christians today much concern is expressed over the findings of form criticism when it shows, among other factors, certain unaligned sections of Scripture.

The argument for Christians, and it seems true especially for the Orthodox, has often been more one of community (Tradition) before Scripture. There is, of course, validity here. They ask: "Should the community, through Tradition, when it produces and transmits the biblical stories according to the truth which they lived and saw (this would roughly correspond to what we mean by 'true' myth), be allowed to have precedence over Scripture?" In other words, whether we are speaking about myth and ritual, or Scripture and Tradition, both are asking the same question: are we in such danger of whether something is 'true' or not, if we allow for the *fact* that story, or true myth, may indeed present the reality, or at least, a glimpse of the reality?

Part of this problem can be solved if we can look at the story as coming from the reality, and then as one passed on and written down by those who witnessed that reality, e.g. of Christ. If this were accepted, much of the apparent anxiety aroused over form criticism of the Bible as a destroying factor, instead of an illuminating one, could be alleviated. Veselin Kesich in giving a balanced view of biblical criticism touches our point:

It is, therefore, an essential task for those Orthodox who are involved in Biblical studies to break through this resistance and to remove suspicion by showing that the proper function of criticism is not to destroy *but to illumine*. It is not directed toward leading the members of the Church astray, but toward deepening their understanding of God's way and purposes in history.<sup>11</sup>

Through biblical criticism we are brought vis-à-vis the *Christian* problem of story from reality, the analogy of which is the primitive's ritual from myth. This analogy, of course, has nothing to do with the fact that Christ *historically* existed and the character of

the myths did not. But there is more to consider than just the analogy of the inhabited - uninhabited space through myth and ritual: the very structure of the space which is inhabited must be considered.

### The Axis Mundi

For primitive man, there was always a 'center,' a cosmic axis around which the territory (for example, the village) became habitable. It was from that center that the power of life was emitted. The Melanesian, for example, as E.S. Handy discovered, believes that the *mana*, the supernatural process which was capable of being conveyed in almost any object was concentrated at the center; it was here primal *mana*. The object which was placed at the center could vary greatly since the *mana* was not exclusive to a particular substance; it might be in a stone, a stick or any inanimate or animate object or person. Spencer and Gillen also found that the Arunta tribe had as their center of the cosmos, the 'sacred pole' which was fashioned from a gum tree and which if broken brought catastrophe, since it brought chaos and therefore an end to their world.<sup>12</sup>

The feeling of *mana* as sheer power, the occult force of holiness, has a universal place for sure, but just as we are not ready to accept Christianity as just another totem and taboo system, so we cannot readily accept this *mana* as a raw and primitive feeling as the only meaning of the Church; obviously there is more involved. As was mentioned, however, surely God prepared man's cognitive processes through his search of *mana*. A similar concept of such power is found in other religions: the Muslims speak of *baraka*, the Japanese of *kami*, the ancient Egyptians of *hike*, the Hebrews of *El*, the Indians of *brahma*, the Romans of *numen*, and the Elganyi of Africa of *mungu*. In any case, it is around this power, the *dynamis* of holiness, that the cosmos is formed.

For the Orthodox Church, it is within the ancient ritual of the *Litiya*, which is celebrated in some traditions on Saturday evenings, that we can see a parallel. This service at once indicates these cosmological understandings of inhabiting the world or organizing the space, and the constructing of the *axis mundi*, or the center of the world.

In the post-Constantine era of Byzantium, the Church itself was constructed to lay as the *axis mundi*: "the center of the world, she confessed herself as the salt and salvation of the world."<sup>13</sup> If

one observed Constantinople as the Orthodox cosmos, he would note the ancient Saint Sophia Cathedral as its center. At the time of this service, the whole gathering of people would move in procession from the Center throughout the city-cosmos. It was during that procession that the sanctification of 'all the space' took place. The patriarch or bishop symbolically blessed the outer limits of the city with the blessed water, and thus by using the primordial substance (water, q.v. baptism in the last section), restructured the cosmos by taking the sanctity from the *axis mundi* into the profane world. In this way, the Church made the 'space of the world' habitable and therefore 'real.' The Church, organizing it by sanctifying it, created a ritualistic paradigm of the cosmogony, the beginning of the world which was sanctified; the world was made into what God wanted it to be before man made it profane, that is, before man voluntarily separated himself from God.

#### **Church as Paradise: Art and Aesthetic Harmony**

But the Church can only sanctify the world because she, in herself, contains and represents sanctification, i.e., she is the *Beth-el*, the house of God. Because she contains sanctification, she becomes also the 'opening,' the pre-eminent link which allows passage from one dimension to another, from earth to heaven. For the primitive also, his center of the world served this purpose.

On the most archaic levels of culture this possibility of transcendence is expressed by various images of an opening; here, in the sacred enclosure, communication with the gods is made possible; hence there must be a door to the world above by which the gods can descend to earth and man can symbolically ascend to heaven.<sup>14</sup>

This movement between heaven and earth is seen in the Orthodox Church, at once, through the physical structure of building and her ancient ritual.

Much can be said of the building, but it shall only be noted that it is built to represent the universe. The altar which represents paradise, is ideally in the East and it is from the East that the sun rises. This fact is important since there is no cosmos in darkness. Light is made present again, that is, re-presented sacramentally. But physically there is very little difference in what has been said of the Orthodox Church than from any other. The difference in the Byzantine structure which expresses, in a different way, the movement between heaven and earth, is the

presence of the icons on the iconostasis which lies between the people and the altar area.

An important note to make is that the royal doors on the iconostasis in front of the altar are left open during the post-Easter period, the Pentecostarion. This custom for the Orthodox Church expresses the fact that the paradisal situation has been re-created by Christ's resurrection from the dead, thereby reuniting man with God.

But the theology of the icon itself also expresses the joining of the two dimensions. Icons are never relative products of the creative imagination. In their two-dimensional manner in which a certain 'stiffness' is observed, they possess a slightly awkward feeling that is clearly not the art of profane realism. The icon is meant to represent the archetype of the heavenly being; it is meant to be a type of 'window' which allows the 'flow' between heaven and earth. And yet it is not completely other-worldly; it partakes of the qualities of both worlds in that it at once possesses the bodily image of man and the angelic aura of heaven.

It must also be added that there is a particular order, a harmony with which the icons are placed on the iconostasis; within the paradisal cosmos, order is necessary. In this way, the Church through iconography is thought of as the paradisal paradigm, the re-creating of that order before there was sacred and profane.

It is through iconography and the whole meaning of the iconostasis that we are led, therefore, to a discussion of the anthropological meaning of art and harmony, as well as its general aesthetic character. The same transcendence for which, Eliade tells us, the archaic man was striving through various bodily movements, is reached by the Christian exactly through the aesthetic language of the Church. Once again, we are speaking more of the anthropological dimension of *homo religiosus* and not the technicalities of the various aesthetic elements.

In seeking to render God more vivid and real to the believer, art has become the anthropological handmaid of faith. One cannot, in turn, speak of art as a language of the liturgical experience unless he is speaking of the intuitive and the emotional consciousness which is aroused by the beauty of the art. H.H. Horne, in *Psychological Principles of Education* speaks about how the consciousness is as intuitional and emotional as it is intellectual or volitional, and it is to that part of the religious consciousness that the sense of beauty aspires. She says:

The consciousness is as truly emotional in character as it is intellectual or volitional. And the sense of beauty is the finest differentiation of the life of feeling in man. The coldness of intellectuality and the narrowness of practicality are warmed and widened through the love of the beautiful. To an intellectual soul, beauty says there are values that can be felt which cannot be described, to a practical soul, beauty says there are useless things which are also precious. The knowledge of the truth makes one discerning, but not tender; the volition of the good makes one correct, but not attractive; it is the love of beauty that unifies life in one perfect whole.<sup>15</sup>

In a like manner, Alexander Schmemann speaks about beauty and harmony as important aspects of the Liturgy. He speaks about the joy found in the singing and ritual, in vestments and in censing, in the whole beauty and harmony of the Liturgy. He emphasizes that it is now beyond the categories of the 'necessary.' Indeed, is he not speaking, like Horne, about the same aesthetical 'language,' not of necessity, but of the beauty of art and harmony? It is this which touches the intuitive and the emotional and allows passage from this dimension to that one, from earth to heaven.

Thus, through observing that aesthetical being and harmony found in both the interior structures of the Orthodox Church and iconography, an analogy can be seen which shows the line of continuity with archaic man's quest for paradise, the opening to the sacred dimension.

As we have mentioned, the rites in the Byzantine Church also show the very same nature of passage between the two realities. The Divine Liturgy, when it begins with the priest's words: "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," indicates this essential characteristic. The gathering is thereby 'moved,' as it were, into the Kingdom of Heaven, the transcendental reality where the second coming of Christ, the *parousia*, is foretasted. There has been a great amount of literature concerning this eschatological passage in the Liturgy, and therefore the whole rite of the Liturgy will not be discussed here, except to say that it also, like iconography and the whole sacramental life of the Church, serves to bring God and man, heaven and earth, into communication. Instead, we will turn our attention to observing the continuity through other particular rites.

#### **Holy Friday and Easter Rites as Cosmic Regeneration**

A unique analogy can be drawn by observing certain Orthodox

cyclical rites that express similar meanings with archaic man's wish for regeneration of the cosmos. For the primitive, the return to the time of origin gave hope of rebirth. He learned the myth which taught how his cosmos came into being as well as the history which followed creation. It was when he ritually experienced, that is, lived the myth (which varied from culture to culture), that he could be transposed to that time of origin and thereby know the sacred reality. But to return, he first had to overcome temporal and profane time, which carried with it for him death as the *conditio sine qua non* of his earthly existence. Instead he had to move into sacred time, time which was equal to itself and, therefore, not passing and temporal. In this sacred time he was allowed to return to that time indefinitely, through his ritual re-living.

But for the Church, it is more than a myth as an end which allows the return; it is the ever-present Holy Spirit which allows the overcoming of time. The Holy Spirit abides in the Church through her sacramental succession and the continuity of the hierarchy. "In the life and existence of the Church time is mysteriously overcome and mastered, time, so to speak, stands still."<sup>16</sup>

In *Myth and Reality*, Eliade makes the similar point for the primitive man: "... by 'living' the myth one emerges from profane, chronological time, and enters a time that is of a different quality, a 'sacred' time at once primordial and indefinitely recoverable."<sup>17</sup> If he could return to that time, he could be re-created in the perfection with which the cosmos was created. But it was first necessary that there be death, the end of one world before the beginning of a new one. In this way, by returning to that time, the primitive regenerated his cosmos, and began to count his time from one cosmogonic rite to the next.

For the Orthodox Church, since Christ is the focus in such rites, the cosmogonic regeneration involves His death and resurrection: the Christian's time of origin involves two separate instances, which, although happening at different historical times, carry the same meaning. This means that the resurrection of Christ recreates the paradisal union of man with God, as it was before the fall of Adam, as it was in that time. Christ takes the whole of mankind back to paradise by defeating the mortality inherited from Adam when he separated himself from God. Christ is thus called the Second Adam.

One example in which the Orthodox season of rites carries the Church to that time, can be seen beginning on Holy Friday. (Of

course, the cycle is much larger, taking in the entire year.) The Church experiences and lives in the sacred time when Christ died. The *epitaphios*, being taken down from the cross, i.e. the icon of Christ's body being taken down, is placed in the tomb after which a series of lamentations are sung by the priest and congregation. The Church feels herself 'dead,' as it were, separated from life and her source, God. One stasis of the lamentations expresses this feeling:

O Life, how canst thou die?  
 How canst thou dwell in the grave?  
 But thou destroyed the dominion of death  
 And raiseth the dead from hell.

But already, as can be seen by the last two lines, the Church anticipates the rebirth, the regeneration of the Church-cosmos, which will ritually be seen at the resurrection. The Church never really 'dies' in the ontological sense, but she passes through the crucifixion before the resurrection. She longs to be transfigured into a life, an ordered cosmos, instead of the present darkness and chaos. Nicholas Arseniev expresses it much better:

The world passes, Life is swallowed, is subjected by Death. The soul yearns for such a transfiguration in which Death is eliminated, in which the World becomes really and substantially changed . . . and in which it is delivered from Death and Sin and Evil and suffering, Death being swallowed up into Victory and eliminated.<sup>18</sup>

On Holy Saturday the anticipation which was felt already on Friday becomes reality and is ritually expressed. The Saturday rite represents Christ's descent into hell to restore life to those already dead, and thereby creates for the whole of mankind the paradisal situation. The Church-cosmos, in this way, includes mankind of all the ages, even those who were dead before the Incarnation. In this rite, the priest represents Christ's descent by moving throughout the Church scattering laurel leaves.

And then, the *Typicon* says, on Saturday evening, a little before midnight, "the priest and people take their lights and exit the church via procession." At this point they are outside of paradise and the doors are closed; they remain separated although still in anticipation; that is, still anticipating the rebirth of the Church-cosmos. In the Antiochian tradition, as one example, the doors are knocked upon three times, after which they are thrown open and,

as they enter, the people may sing along with the *Christos Aneste*: “This is the day created by the Lord. . . .” Strange words, it may seem, to be sung at this point, but we are liturgically carried back, we are taken to the very first day of creation: Christ’s resurrection re-created that same condition. This is clear by observing the words that are sung as they enter ‘paradise’: “This is the day created by the Lord”; this is *that* day.

Since this marks the beginning of the new cosmic existence, all time in the Orthodox yearly cycle is organized around Easter. Again Schmemann explains:

The entire worship of the Church is organized around Easter, and therefore the liturgical year, i.e. the sequence of seasons and feasts, becomes a journey, a pilgrimage towards Pascha, the End, which is at the same time the Beginning—the end of all that which is old; the beginning of the new life, a constant passage from this world into the Kingdom already revealed in Christ.<sup>19</sup>

One moves, therefore, from the cosmic ‘weariness’ of Holy Friday, when the season within the annual cycle seems exhausted, when the nature of the time in the temporal sense seems to have finally driven man to the brink of giving up to death; indeed, when Christ dies, all seems in dissolution. One moves from this to the sudden bursting through the doors at Easter, to the re-creation of the universe. Again, “This is the day created by the Lord.”

For the Christian, however, one must speak of more than this end which is the regeneration of the cosmos; in general, one must speak of the history of salvation of man as the means to that end, that is, to cosmic regeneration. For him, salvation of the whole cosmos has to begin with a decisive act of victory over the mortality of man; the ultimate enemy, the one which brings all the cosmos to its dissolution, is precisely the death of man which is the result of Adam’s catastrophic separation from God. All this permeates the theology of the Fathers, e.g. St. Athanasios, the Cappadocians, St. Irenaeos, St. Cyril of Alexandria. Salvation, therefore, means re-unification with God (*theosis*, deification) of the entire cosmos through man, and this latter re-unification through the Incarnation (which accomplished that end by Christ’s cross and resurrection). Thus we see how the Fathers always knew θέωσις καὶ σάρκωσις, deification and Incarnation, are inextricably bound. Salvation, true life, is reached in the greatest of paradoxes; life through death, life emerging from the grave, the Easter

of life from the Friday of death. Christ quickened death itself: "By death He trampled down death."

For the primitive it was a return to the beginning as an end, in and by itself; for the Christian it is return to the beginning, or more clearly, to the condition of the beginning, through the historical and salvific Christ-event.

### **Individual Rebirth**

The entrance of individuals into the cosmos must also be considered. There is here a connection with the 'communal' re-generation just mentioned; the collective religious life is affected by the individual's initiation into it.

In every primitive rite, 'death' was a prerequisite for entrance (birth) into the sacred life of the community; man's ontological status would change only after a ritualistic death. He was born only with physical existence and was not yet recognized by his family or accepted by the community; he was not yet a 'living person.' Primitive initiatory rites varied greatly, but besides the re-creating of the cosmogony, they usually involved a period of instruction and a separation from the society which represented death. He might have been sent into the bush, or buried in a grave dug in the shape of a womb, or possibly some torture rite, e.g. circumcision. These rites meant the death of such things as childhood and asexuality, or especially, of ignorance. When he was 'reborn,' it was into the society of knowledgeable and initiated men, and it might have been with a new name or a knowledge of secret language. Only then was he able to enter the cosmos. This important point is made in *Rites and Symbols of Initiation*:

We must note this characteristic of the archaic mentality: the belief that a state cannot be changed without first being annihilated. It is impossible to exaggerate . . . the obsession with the absolute beginning the cosmogony.<sup>20</sup>

These observations can thus be made: (1) The initiate must 'die'; (2) The whole cosmos is regenerated with him; (3) There is here also a return to the beginning of time.

The obvious analogy of initiation in the Byzantine rite is in the baptismal liturgy. To begin with, the initiate in the early Church was always baptized within the Liturgy at which the whole community was present; like archaic society, they were *all* regenerated by this act upon one of its members. This is so because the initiate

is taken along with the Church to the very beginning of creation. The use of water, the primordial substance of the cosmos, makes this return possible, as Genesis chapter 13 indicates:

What is important . . . is that baptismal water represents the matter of the cosmos . . . And its blessing . . . acquires thus a truly cosmic and redemptive significance . . . [It] signifies the return or redemption of matter to this initial and essential meaning.<sup>21</sup>

But like archaic man, it is not only a 'return,' it is an abolition. In order to enter the Christian cosmos man must die to his natural or profane existence. The initiate is therefore totally immersed in the water of the baptismal font. A clear analogy can be made here between the font and our archaic symbols, e.g. the womb, the embryonic hut, or the *terra mater*. It is when he is totally immersed in the primordial substance of water that he at once dies and is reborn into the spiritual dimension of life.

There is, of course, much more to be said about the Orthodox rite of baptism, but it is impossible in such a brief inquiry. What is important to note, however, is that the same three observations made above regarding the archaic man's initiation can be seen in the Orthodox baptism. An obvious anthropological correlation is seen.

In summary, it is hoped that by drawing such analogies between primitive man and the Orthodox Byzantine ethos, we can see that those suppositions made in the first part of this inquiry, that is, that man is *homo religiosus*, that he lives in a cosmos which is structured by and around sanctification, and that he shares certain common conditions in every age, are points of anthropological continuity in man's religious behavior.

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*JAMES STEVE COUNELIS*

**CONTEMPORARY EPISTEMOLOGY,  
FORMATIVE THEOLOGY AND THE  
FORTHCOMING GREAT AND HOLY COUNCIL**

It is the duty of clergy and lay people to follow the great commission of the Ascension through the application of the educational model of Pentecost until each makes his or her apology at the Second Coming and Judgment. And the educational model of Pentecost is to theologize in all tongues and to bear witness to the Risen Christ at all times and in every place.

Remembering McLuhan's well turned phrase "the medium is the message" along with the old saw "actions speak louder than words," it is appropriate to explain how Pentecost's model of education is important to the coming Great Council.

The miracle of the flames, the linguistic facility miraculously acquired by the Holy Apostles, and that day's conversions to the Risen Lord provide an important educational analogue. That analogue is found in the fact that the 'good news' must be transmitted to all people, regardless of language, place and time. Indeed, St. Basil speaks of Pentecost as the undoing of Babel through God's will. This educational model called Pentecost has been applied since that first day of the Church. The coming Great and Holy Council has the imperative to act in accord with the notion of a pentecostal language. This paper is dedicated to describing this pentecostal method and language.

Contemporary epistemology, found in the arts, sciences, technology, social/behavioral sciences, and in political/economic *praxis*, has produced a new language, which needs to be sacralized through its use by the Church. As the Greek Church Fathers used Greek epistemic categories for theologizing, so today, the Orthodox Church needs to do the same through doctrine, ecclesiology, and *praxis*. To respond effectively to the agenda items in ecclesiology, pastoral ministry, and social ethics that were selected for the work of the Great Council, this Council will need to translate Orthodox Christian principles through these contemporary epistemic categories. Believing that the future decisions of the Great and Holy Council will move each believer closer to *theosis*, permit

the following sketch of some of the relations between contemporary epistemology and the several council agenda items to be presented.

First of all, the nature of the Church is fully brought into focus in terms of the voting/representational system to be adopted for the Great Council. “Who is to represent their churches and vote in the Great Council?” is crucial. Of course, democratic values in contemporary life have replaced the monarchical/elitist values that are inherent in much Orthodox discussion about the nature of the Church, Orthodox canon law, and the institution of the episcopacy which was modelled upon the Byzantine emperor. Furthermore, universal education, communication and transportation technologies, and post-industrial economics are significant social facts which distance us today from eighth century Byzantium, the time of the last Ecumenical Council. The reality of the lexicon and practice of democratic values and processes fit very well into Orthodox ecclesiology when viewed from another perspective.

Two notions are involved here. The first is that everyman is equal before God and His judgment. The second is the Orthodox Christian belief that the Church is defined eucharistically as being whole only when the two priesthoods of the clergy and laity are present during the Divine Liturgy. These two ideas of the Church are significant bases for democratically defining attendance and participation at the Great Council. In thus defining the Church, I believe that any voting and representational system which would exclude the lower clergy and lay people from full conciliar participation would deprecate and make a sham out of the two priesthoods and nullify the eucharistic meaning of the Church. Full conciliar participation for both priesthoods is a most worthy mode for sacralizing democratic values, language, and practice in the Holy Church when the Great and Holy Council is convened. At the national level, the Council of Moscow of 1917-1918 was just a first attempt. How truly wonderful a celebration it would be for the Great and Holy Council to be able to proclaim as did the Apostles and believers in Jerusalem, “It is good to the Holy Spirit and to us,” and for this to be done through the full work of the two priesthoods of clergy and laity assembled in council.

Secondly, the agenda items of the Great Council, *viz.*, the diaspora, autocephaly, autonomy and the diptychs, raise questions about the nature of the Church at an operational level of general-

ity. There are three general principals which doctrine, canon law, and church practice have sanctioned and sustained: (1) The Eucharistic community is the basic unit of the church; (2) Political boundaries of government determine the boundaries of local church jurisdiction and administration; (3) The Church is not based upon ethnic/linguistic units of jurisdiction and administration. Though nineteenth and twentieth century nationalisms have tried to produce linguistically and culturally homogenous political states, the Council of Constantinople of 1872 condemned the necessary connection between a local church and its possible ethnic and linguistic homogenous character as phyletism.

Today, the need for a formal, objective, and systematic implementation of these ecclesial principles is evident. Fundamental to this is the appropriate organizational accommodation of the Orthodox Church to a modern trans-national world, made so by economic interdependency, instantaneous communications, and rapid transport systems.

Using the Orthodox ecclesial principle of conciliarity, it appears that a modern 'trans-ecclesial' synod, sitting regularly every three or four years, could be designed to solve problems that are intra-Orthodox in kind. Hence church problems like the diaspora, autocephaly, autonomy, and the diptychs could be resolved in a timely fashion. To such issues, the trans-ecclesial synod could resolve problems in inter-church relations, ecumenical practice and participation, and inter-religious dialogue and relations with non-Christian religions. Surely, this synod could also call a General Council to resolve theological and creedal issues of the moment. Using the confederal notion of the United Nations as a mode for organizing this synod, the traditional Orthodox principles of church organization are not violated; but they are employed to solve the intra-Orthodox needs present in a rapidly changing trans-national society. It is worthy to note that in 1921 the Ecumenical Patriarchate suggested to the churches of Christ in the world to organize a trans-denominational structure on the pattern of the League of Nations. With a trans-ecclesial synod having a voting/representational system for both priesthoods, the eucharistic definition and factual unity of the Church are found and the Orthodox Church thus sacralizes by theology and practice the predominant democratic values of our day.

The Orthodox Christian eucharistic community sacralizes both time and place. Hence, the significance of the liturgical calendar

for the Orthodox Church. The calendrical item on the agenda of the Great Council is a third instance where contemporary epistemology impinges upon the mission of the Council. The historical “fact” that some Orthodox Churches use the Julian calendar and others use the Gregorian calendar scandalizes the Church as a whole. Furthermore, Orthodox Christians in the diaspora are affected by the calculation of Easter when western Christians, using the Gregorian calendar, celebrate Easter with the Orthodox once in every four years. These intra-Orthodox and inter-Christian divisions concerning the calendar require adjustments for everyone.

In 1977, the ‘Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council’ held a consultation of canon lawyers, astronomers, and theologians on some issues regarding the dating of Easter. Five studies reported on the historical/canonical, doctrinal, pastoral, liturgical, and sociological aspects of the dating of Easter. This Geneva Consultation came to several conclusions: (1) The Passover proviso in the formula for the setting of the date for Easter was in fact a later addition and not part of the original decision of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea, (2) With the calculation of Passover changed through the years, this stipulation has serious errors in setting the date for Orthodox Easter; (3) The Gregorian calendar is also in error in determining the vernal equinox; (4) To follow the formula of the First Ecumenical Council in the dating of Easter, the accurate determination of Easter requires a more scientific astronomical calculation of the vernal equinox. Thus this Geneva Consultation on the dating of Easter recommended that a qualified team of astronomers be entrusted to determine the true vernal equinox dates for a number of centuries, their calculation being based upon the most advanced scientific knowledge. The Consultation’s recommendations were signed by sixteen participants, representing most of the patriarchates, autocephalous churches, and other jurisdictions. In addition to this consultation report, the Patriarchates of Alexandria and Bulgaria together with the churches of Greece and Poland are studying and reporting on the question of a common Orthodox calendar, these studies being preparatory to the Great Council.

These recommendations are quite startling to traditional Orthodox faithful. The epistemological impact of historical and scientific study on the dating of Easter certainly will re-arrange traditional notions on how that paschal dating should occur. One must add to this the further impact of contemporary astronomy upon Ortho-

dox theology whose assumptional roots are in the Bible and classical Greek astronomy. Though not too evident today, the epistemological impact of contemporary natural sciences upon Orthodox theology cummulatively will be significant over time.

The Great Council's agenda item on fasting is a fourth instance where contemporary epistemology will have an impact. Taking into consideration the diverse social and cultural conditions in which Orthodox communicants live, fasting as a religious and salvific practice needs much redefinition and clarification for contemporary Orthodoxy.

The effects of materialism and secularism have been profound in the erosion of most of the presuppositions which uphold traditional religions and Orthodox Christianity. The impact of psychology and psychiatry, nutritional and pharmacological studies on physical and psychical well being, and current food technologies that alter the natural identifying character of foods can make abstinence from particular foods a legalistic sham if not totally irrelevant. And though there is a rising interest in far eastern religions and their westernizing forms, fasting as a partial reflection of the monastic ideal of the angelic life becomes a meaningless truncation of that vital ideal. Indeed, the monastic justification for fasting may heighten its meaninglessness because the monastic ideal is so foreign to urban living which is the predominant social condition of Orthodox Christians. There is little doubt that the Great Council has a significant pastoral duty to restore vitality to the fast in terms that are meaningful to twentieth century urban Orthodox, regardless of culture. A true pentecostal language is needed here, one reflecting the epistemic reality of this day.

In the resolution of the Great Council's agenda items on impediments to marriage and social ethics (i.e., the ideals of peace, freedom, brotherhood and love among the peoples of the world, and the elimination of racial prejudice), the world's contemporary epistemology is involved deeply.

The degrees of consanguinity between two proposed marriage partners and the current genetic science of heritable diseases will require the Orthodox Church to modify, partially, the pastoral basis of pre-marital counseling through scientifically informed clergy. And certainly, the classes of restricted marriages based upon contemporary genetic science will need to be revamped by the Church in consultation with geneticists and medical scientists.

The issues of post-ordinational marriages for all orders of clergy

and impediments to marriage between sacramentally related persons raise, perhaps, the most important theological question coming before the Great and Holy Council. That fundamental question will be: "What is the nature of a sacrament — a *mysterion*?" And the subsidiary questions will thus become those on the characteristics of holy orders and matrimony, including the importance ascribed to their temporal ordering.

Married bishops and marriages permitted through ecclesial economy are historical facts. Though some would regard Orthodox sacramental theology as underdeveloped, perhaps the current understanding of the *mysterion* can encompass practical shifts in policy. However, a fundamental revamping of sacramental theology may be launched; though initially, the monastic ideal probably will preclude any radical change. Importantly, however, the healthy human condition of matrimony is preferable, one that needs to be encouraged for all believers and for all levels of the clergy.

The theology of matrimony will be further explored by the Great Council in terms of the pastoral concern over mixed marriages. There are three classes of pastoral issues in mixed marriages affecting the theology of matrimony: (1) marriages between Orthodox and other Christians; (2) marriages between Orthodox and other theistic religionists, e.g., Moslems or Bhuddists; (3) marriages between Orthodox and atheists, e.g., communists. The practical necessity to re-think the theology of matrimony as well as church rules and attitudes toward mixed marriage will no doubt produce change. Is matrimony compromised theologically in all these cases of mixed marriages? Certainly it is morally corrupting to the communicant who needs the prayers and blessings of the Church at the critical spiritual moment of matrimony to be excluded from the Church and be denied the prayers and blessings of Church while morally creating the basis for family life. The salvific role of the sacraments appears to be the most important general principle for the believer. Within this salvific role, the Great Council's wisdom needs to be developed.

Significantly, the Orthodox Churches have agreed collectively to put issues of social and ethical import on the agenda of the Great and Holy Council. These are the ideals of peace, brotherhood, and love among the peoples of the world, and the elimination of racial prejudice. These issues are important to both the internal ministry of the Church as well as for her witness and mini-

stry to the world.

In this fifth and last instance, the substantive phraseology of all these social agenda items reflects admirably the realism of our contemporary epistemic categories, and their moral content heightens Orthodox Christian conscience in an affirmative reply to Cain's question to God, *viz.*, "Yes, I am my brother's keeper."

It is useful to note that the specific issues of famine, rampant disease, nuclear armament, the preservation of the environment, political revolutions, urban blight, and poverty among many others were not made agenda items. These appear as subsidiary technical issues, given the breadth of the agenda items and the moral imperative of our answer to Cain's question. There is little doubt that the natural, social, and behavioral sciences will provide the Great Council the reality-testing basis for ascertaining truth from fiction in these moral issues.

The framework for all the preparatory studies and the discussions with the Great Council will need to reflect the salvific message of the resurrection Hymn which proclaims that all things are forgiven in the Resurrection. Therein rests James' message about faith and good works being the fundamental justification for the Orthodox Christian. The Great and Holy Council's response to these social and ethical issues will provide an informed and guided opportunity to live as Orthodox Christians and to do good works.

Accepting Metropolitan Damaskinos' notion that the preparatory processes of the Secretariat for the Great Council (including the work of this International Conference) are synodal processes, permit the writer to suggest the following about these processes.

This writer believes that the historical dialogue on theological issues in Orthodox church life is its nature and responsibility. To theologize is every believer's trust and service. And the pre-conciliar studies and discussions on theological and ecclesial questions always have been a preparatory or formative process of Orthodox Christian conscience. Hence, theological discussions and pre-conciliar studies are formative theology. The *theologoumena* in the Orthodox Church best represent this notion of formative theology. Dogma and canons represent collectively some closure of Orthodox Christian opinion and conscience on given matters of faith and order. These conciliar decisions are summative theology – the prophetic office of the Church made manifest.

Historically, each church council, whether local or ecumenical, made its decisions through a pentecostal method and language

developed out of the epistemology of its time and place. Following Pentecost, it is this writer's prayer that the coming Great and Holy Council will use our contemporary epistemology and sacralize it through the Holy Spirit into the pentecostal method and language of the Council and of the Church Militant's ministry to her believers and to the whole of God's world.



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ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΑΓΙΟΓΡΑΦΟΙ ΜΕΧΠΙ ΤΟ 1821. By Phoivos I. Piompinos. Athens: n.p., 1979. Pp. 337. Paperbound.

Piompinos' *Greek Hagiographers to 1821* can be described as a biographical dictionary of known makers of icons to the year 1821. By hagiographers, the author means all makers of icons regardless of the medium in which they worked, and by Greek, those who spoke Greek, were of the Orthodox faith, and were born in the "wider Greek world," that is, in areas with flourishing Greek centers many of which were outside the geographic area known as Greece today.

Piompinos' biographical dictionary lists 1220 artists whose biographies well-known have longer entries, limited, however, to the most important details of their lives and work. For those less known, the author provides all the information he was able to gather. Each entry is also accompanied by at least one bibliographical source.

The appendix (pp. 265-300) is divided into two parts: 1) a listing of the hagiographers according to their place of origin, for Greece according to province, 2) a chronological listing according to centuries (pp. 283-300), and 3) a thirty-page bibliography.

It is interesting to note that of the 1179 hagiographers identified chronologically, 13 can be placed in the first nine centuries; 190 from the tenth to the fifteenth centuries; and the remaining 976 iconographers, from the sixteenth century to 1821. The list of artists includes 43 monks, 21 deacons, 130 priests, 69 ordained monks, and 5 bishops.

It is also interesting to note that of all areas Crete has produced the greatest number (279) of iconographers, the earliest dating from the fourteenth century, followed by 87 who hailed from Epeiros. Constantinople, the Byzantine Empire's foremost artistic center, is represented by only 11 names, while Thessalonike by 6. The last two numbers are, I believe, a strong indication that with further research many more hagiographers can be identified.

Mr. Piompinos' book, a labor of love, which was produced to honor those who "love the beauty of God's house," represents a real service to those interested in Byzantine and especially Post-Byzantine art. He is to be commended for his very useful work which he promises to continue.

N. M. Vaporis  
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ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΠΤΤΧΙΟΤΧΟΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΩΝ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΩΝ ΣΧΟΛΩΝ, 1941, ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΡΕΤΝΑ. By Vasileios T. Gioultses. Thessalonike: Kyriakides Bros., 1977. Pp. 189. Illustrations.

The appearance of works using the results of empirical sociology for the study of religion is a new phenomenon in Greek Orthodox theology. According to the author, "the sociological estimate of the particular social and professional problems of Greek theologians constitutes the most basic challenge for the preparation of the present study."

Among the Greek graduates of Orthodox theological schools, the author identifies the Greek Orthodox graduates of the universities of Athens, Thessalonike, and of Halke, who are serving in different institutions in Greece, those who are living outside of Greece and are serving as clergymen, and those in institutions of higher learning all over the world.

The author particularly focuses on the problem of theologians who are not working in the field of theology, the entrance of a great number of graduates of theology into the academic hierarchy of their country, the existence of essential information according to which clergymen participate in cultural, social, and athletic clubs, and recently in economic trusts and well-known political schemes as well.

In his questionnaire he asked the opinions of theologians on critical ecclesiastical matters in Greece, such as clerical dress, shortening of holy services, special offers to clergymen, state-Church relations, the civil marriage ceremony, clerical syndicalism, episcopacy, inter-Church relations, Church and anti-institutionalism, and monasticism. The assessment of the answers to these questions is, more or less, positive.

Vasil T. Istavridis

ΟΙ ΡΩΣΟΙ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΟΛΑΤΡΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΟΡΟΥΣ. By Konstantinos K. Papourides. Thessalonike: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1977. Pp. 222. Illustrations.

In 1971 Papourides published a study entitled *'Ονοματολάτραι* (Worshippers of the Name), related to the latest theological dispute of Russian monks on Mount Athos, which has been, with few changes incorporated in the present volume as Part I, "Historical Review." In the second edition there is additional material related to the study under consideration, and drawn from the archives and from some rare publications. An enriched bibliography and a summary in English follow.

The author believes that his work will be of help to international bibliography on the above-mentioned subject.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
*Patriarchal Theological School  
 of Halke*



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Ο ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΣ ΒΛΑΣΤΑΡΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΤΜΝΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΟΝ ΕΡΓΟΝ ΤΟΥ.  
(*Matthew Vlastares and His Hymnographic Work*). By P.B. Paschos. Thessalonike: Institute for Balkan Studies – 183, 1978. Pp. 298. 9 plates (unnumbered). Paper.

P.B. Paschos has published a considerable number of articles and books on Greek Orthodox hymnography and related subjects. His latest and quite formidable publication is an unusually splendid treatment of a fourteenth century monk who was known especially for his manual of canon law *Syntagma kata stoicheion* (1335) and who was one of the last ecclesiastical writers of the fourteenth century of Byzantium. Matthew lived in an age filled with conflicts and disturbances and served in the famous monastery of Isaac (which conceals the monastery of Peribleptos whose Katholikon survives to this very day as the Church of St. Pantaleimon near the Via Egnatia in the center of the city). We do not know when Matthew Vlastares was born but we can conjecture that it must have been sometime during the early 1290s and that he must have died during the early 1360s in Thessalonike. Here was a churchman who wrote prolifically in defense of the doctrines of the Orthodox Church and who very likely had studied medicine which he abandoned in favor of the monastic life. He may have spent some time on the Holy Mount and served as Great Chancellor of the Metropolis of Thessalonike or at least received the honorary title from the Ecumenical Patriarch or the Byzantine Emperor in recognition of his distinguished service as an Orthodox writer and abbot of the Isaac Monastery.

Matthew wrote both prose and poetic works by which he contributed significantly to the so-called Renaissance of Theological Letters of the Fourteenth Century. Of his works only two have been edited in the last century, the rest remain in manuscript. The hymnographic works have now received critical attention. What we have of his prose works consist of ten writings on theological controversies, seven dealing with canon law or summaries of canonical and related works, and one translation-paraphrase of *The Ladder* of St. John of the Ladder. The poetic works embrace thirteen epigrams or versified titles to various writings of his own or others, seventeen acrostics in his works, three poems referring to ecclesiastical or royal offices (*officia*), ninety stichera appropriate for the period of the Pentekostarion, two hundred and sixty-seven troparia of Beatitudes for the period of the Pentekostarion, and finally one hundred and ninety-nine troparia of Beatitudes for the period of the eight tomes, namely, of the Parakletike. The above liturgical poems of the Stichera and the Beatitudes are found in manuscripts simply under the name of "Matthew the Hieromonk," though all evidence seems to point to authorship by Vlastares and the bulk were composed for the services of the Pentekostarion to fill a felt need.

What is clear from a critical examination of the extant evidence is that Vlastares did not write original hymnographic works but rather based his formal elements, meter, and music, for the most part, on the automela of

ancient hymnographers. However, he did incorporate creatively into his hymns dogmatic elements, especially of a pneumatological interest and character, and combined the Hesychastic propensities of his age and their dogmatic truths in the liturgical poetry of the Church, especially through his own creation of the Beatitudes of the Pentekostaria.

From the small number of preserved codices, it may be deduced that Matthew's liturgical poems, in contrast to his other works which were used throughout Byzantium and in Slavic lands, were not widely used except in a small way in local churches, perhaps only in Thessalonike where the hymnographer lived, and they certainly did not make their way into the printed Pentekostaria.

Matthew's poetic efforts do not significantly differ from those of his predecessors except in certain special cases where polemical theses intervene and certain prosaic elements intrude that put some hymns on the margin of hymnography. His language, terminology, and style generally reveal a penchant for mystical or symbolic realism. In many cases there is clear evidence of the influence of the language of the Classical Greek (especially Attic) authors. A mystagogical and eschatological character marks the content of his hymns. His hymns are used to exalt Orthodox dogma and indicate complete preoccupation with it, as well as prayer replete with compunction and Hesychastic feeling and union of the faithful with God via the liturgical life and poetry. This draws Matthew into discussing Trinitarian problems in his hymns and utilizing the example of the Saints as evidence of the concrete fulfillment of the words of the Gospels.

The above summary can hardly give the reader an idea of the details into which P.B. Paschos has gone to investigate the life and works of Matthew Vlastares. The three hefty chapters that constitute the heart of the book examine his life and work, the form and construction of his hymns, and the content of those hymns. All information contained in this impressive volume is heavily and properly documented. In addition to a preface and epilogue, there is a substantial bibliography, a list of abbreviations of manuscripts, journals, dictionaries, etc., a table of codices, an index of important names and places, a resume in French, and plates.

Paschos has performed a valuable service to students of Orthodox Church history by calling their attention to an ecclesiastical figure who was not principally a hymnographer *par excellence* but a saintly Hesychast and Neptic Theologian, an outspoken defender and apologist of Orthodox theology who in his works reflected the struggles of his epoch in ecclesiastical and theological matters. Paschos even suggests that in future revisions of liturgical books, the Orthodox Church may wish to consider the possibility of inclusion of some of Matthew's more poetic hymns to replace hymns that have not been particularly successful or to fill a hymnographic void where one exists.

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*Life in the Tomb.* By Stratis Myrivilis. Translated from the modern Greek original by Peter Bien. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1977. Pp. xix, 325, 3 maps. \$13.50.

Stratis Myrivilis (1892-1969) was one of the most important representatives of the so-called "Generation of the Thirties" in modern Greek literature. His novels and short stories have been among the best literary works that have appeared in Greece since 1930. And his first novel, *Life in the Tomb*, is still considered, and rightly so, as his masterpiece.

*Life in the Tomb* is a war novel, or rather, an anti-war novel. The narration, in first person, in the form of letters from the front to a beloved girl back home in the island of Lesbos, purports to be the diary of Sergeant Anthony Kostoulas who was killed in the trenches somewhere on the Macedonian Front during World War I. The narration is realistic and detailed, but also meditative and lyrical as it behooves the hero and narrator, who appears to be a very sensitive and cultured young man. His bitter reaction to the brutal conditions at the war-front and his gentle reminiscences of the simple but peaceful and beautiful life back home make a poignant contrast that runs throughout the book.

Besides the main hero, many other persons have leading or secondary roles. Their different backgrounds and characters are depicted in vivid colors, and their interreactions produce many lively and dramatic scenes under the cruel conditions of the war-life. Tragedy is often overwhelming, but often also black humor and sarcasm leave deeply burning wounds on their victims. On the other hand, a gentle, poetic, feeling and an unaffected tenderness, enhanced by humane spirit and genuine love of nature and life, compose a moving picture of change and suggest the dawning of light in the darkness of reality.

But the main theme of the novel is not the life of this or that person, but War —its actual process and its horrors for individuals and the nation. The work is based on the personal experience of Myrivilis as a soldier, but it also reflects the bitter experience of millions of other people in Greece and other countries during World War I and subsequent wars until today. The Greek *couleur locale* makes the war theme concrete, thus giving the *Life in the Tomb* verisimilitude and certain distinct boundaries. Still, this Greek war novel, *mutatis mutandis*, could be easily understood and appreciated by any people who have experienced war. The novel is basically against war: It opposes war implicitly by presenting its horrors, and condemns it explicitly and with scathing sarcasm. War is not only a tragedy; it is also a scandal, an unpermitted scandal. Unfortunately sixty years after World War I mankind has not yet learned that lesson.

Myrivilis' fiction, *Life in the Tomb*, marked the first start towards the great accomplishments in literature of the "Generation of the Thirties." During that period his systematic work in novel and short story gave us some of the most mature and most beautiful achievements of modern Greek literature, achievements both in exquisitely wrought out form and in rich, meaningful

and moving content. Indeed, Stratis Myrivilis is the great craftsman of modern Greek prose. No other modern Greek prose-writer has worked out his style so artistically as Myrivilis did. On the other hand, the dominant element in all his work is love for life, love for man and love for nature. This all embracing feeling permeates his work deeply and becomes even stronger through his perfect literary workmanship. No wonder, then, that Myrivilis' books, *Life in the Tomb* in particular, have known exceptional success in Greece.

Before the present translation, two other novels of Myrivilis were translated into English by other translators, *The Mermaid Madonna* (1959) and *The Schoolmistress with the Golden Eyes* (1964). Professor Peter Bien's translation of *Life in the Tomb* is an excellent rendition of the original: it is accurate, faithful and highly readable. It was made from the Greek edition of 1955 collated with that of 1930. In his Preface (pp. xi-xix) Bien presents a short account of the historical events of the novel and their geographical locations, stressing their trueness and accuracy by referring to books on history of the "Macedonian Front" written by competent military men, diplomats and historians. He even adds at the end of the book three maps showing Greece and Environs, Mytilene, and The Front, although *Life in the Tomb* is not a work of historiography—truthful though it may be—but a novel, a free creation of imagination based on facts. Very helpful also is an explanatory index of "Terms and References" (pp. xv-xix).

Costas M. Proussis  
Hellenic College

*Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue.* By Kallistos Ware and Colin Davey, eds. London, 1977. Pp. v-99.

This study, prepared by two authorities on Anglican-Orthodox relations, the Orthodox Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and the Anglican Presbyter Colin Davey, has the subtitle: "The Moscow Statement Agreed by the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission 1976 with Introductory Supporting Material." It somehow completes the two former basic writings, Methodios Fouyas' *Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism and Anglicanism* and Vasil T. Istavridis' *Orthodoxy and Anglicanism*.

Beginning with a preface by the Co-chairmen, the Rt. Rev. Robert Runcie, Bishop of St. Albans, and the Most Rev. Athenagoras, Archbishop of Thyaeteira and Great Britain, this new work includes chapters on the Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue 1920-1976 by the Rev. Colin Davey, the Moscow Conference Communiqué, the Moscow Conference 1976, by Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, the Moscow Agreed Statement, and the Thessalonike Meeting 1977.

The two co-chairmen, speaking on the Moscow Conference and the Agreed Statement, are of the opinion that these "constitute a real advance



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## *REFLECTIONS*

### **NEW DIRECTIONS IN ORTHODOX ECUMENISM**

Many people, both within and outside the Orthodox Church, have begun to ring the death knell for the Ecumenical movement and particularly, the Orthodox involvement in it. It seems strange that this should be the case since it is quite obvious that there are new directions of movement and sensitivity in the Ecumenical movement in the Orthodox Church. It appears that the reason for this pessimism rests primarily in dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Orthodox involvement in the World Council of Churches. There seems to be danger here, in that that dissatisfaction, legitimate as it may be, does not necessarily refer to the whole range of participation of the Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical movement. There is a legitimate complaint on the part of the Orthodox in the World Council of Churches and in the National Council of Churches in this country in reference to the foci of these 'main-line Protestant Church-influenced' directions. The Ecumenical movement is much bigger than the World Council of Churches and certainly the National Council of Churches. It should be pointed out, however, that both of those bodies are indicating changed attitudes toward the Orthodox position in seeking to take more cognizance of it. For instance, the National Council of Churches is in the process of reorganizing its central administrative committee structure to include more 'Faith and Order' emphasis in its deliberation, thus downplaying the almost exclusive social focus it has had in the past. Vigorous Orthodox response to that invitation has been forthcoming on the part of Bishop Maximos Aghiorgoussis and Rev. Robert Stephanopoulos, both functioning under the direction of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos.

However, it still remains true that the important Ecumenical movements for the Orthodox are not to be found at present in the World Council of Churches or the National Council of Churches. It seems that the major focus of Orthodox ecumenism with tremendous and exciting possibilities are the dialogues with the non-Chalcedonian Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. These Ecumenical movements are full of promise and very encouraging. It is there where the ecumenical focus of the Orthodox Church seems to be gravitating.

However, there is also another emerging pattern which ought to be looked at with a great deal of care. This emerging interest in ecumenical contact seems to be growing in reference to evangelical Christianity in the United States. The Orthodox, it appears, have become a bit disillusioned with main-line Protestant Churches who do not seem to take as seriously the commitment of the Orthodox Church to the Biblical and early Christian tradition. Two events may be seen as the catalyst for this growing interest. The one is the decision on the part of the Anglican Churches on the ordination of women. It is the opinion of this writer that it is not so much the substantive question of the ordination of women that is disconcerting to the Orthodox, but rather the view that the Anglican Church has shown itself not to be as committed to the Biblical and early Christian tradition on such a matter as we had perceived it to be in the past. As a result, there is without question, a certain disillusionment on the part of the Orthodox in reference to their relationship with the Anglicans. In addition, one might also note as a catalyst, the meetings, organized and promoted by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, held at St. Basil's Academy in Garrison, New York, with the Southern Baptists. What would have appeared to be a very strange mating, i.e. the conservative, traditionalist, history-oriented, theologically-rooted Orthodox who are sacramentally committed, versus the Bible-centered, experience-oriented Southern Baptists, turned out to be a fruitful and encouraging experience for both groups. Subsequently, on many different levels, the Orthodox have sensed a seriousness about the meaning of scripture and the deep concern with spiritual matters on the part of evangelical Christians. There seems to be a growing interest on the part of some Orthodox for a closer discussion and alliance of direction with some evangelical Protestants at this time. This, of course, is not to be interpreted as a blanket suggestion to union with these churches. However, the growing disillusionment with main-line Protestant liberal, social action-oriented churches seems to make the relationship with evangelical Christianity a more interesting ecumenical endeavor.

It remains to be seen what will be occurring here and we will watch its developments with care. The one thing that can be noted is that the Orthodox interest is being reciprocated as well by evangelical Christians.

Stanley S. Harakas  
*Holy Cross*



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Dr. Burke treads new ground in philosophy of religion when he examines the relations of the religious community and the meaning of life. He criticizes the metaphysical interpretation of God as the meaning of life. He questions, ". . . what difference would it make to our interpretation of life if there were a God distinct from the world?" (p. 45). He emphasizes the judgment of all religions on the life of the community and the vision it shares for the ultimate purpose and interpretation of life. These are some of the new insights the Professor provides us with as he points out that the strength of any religion for its survival depends on its vision of life and the enthusiasm that arouses among its followers.

This book is excellent reading material in the philosophy of religion. I was privileged to study under Dr. Burke at Temple University and have personal experience of his sharp intellectual and analytical judgment. I highly recommend this book to all those interested in religion, to the student and the scholar, as well as to the general reader who desires to broaden his understanding of religion.

George C. Papademetriou  
Holy Cross

*New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey.* By E.P. Panagopoulos. Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1978. Pp. 207. \$10.00; Paper, \$4.50.

On 26 June 1768, seven hundred men, women, and children, largely from Messenia and other Greek islands, landed at St. Augustine, East Florida. Within a few days, others joined them until their number swelled to 1,255. These people had endured the hardships of a voyage across the Atlantic and faced the uncertainty of life in a new and strange land to escape the brutal oppression of the Ottoman Turks. For centuries the Turks had enslaved the Greeks, forcing them to pay high taxes and persecuting them for their devotion to the Orthodox faith of their fathers. The year before their arrival in Florida, an Englishman, Dr. Andrew Turnbull, had traveled among the Greek islands offering the people a means to escape the rule of the Turks. Turnbull was the proprietor of a large land grant seventy-five miles south of St. Augustine. He and his partners, such illustrious men as George Grenville, Richard Temple, and William Duncan, had gained the support of the British government which was seeking a way to populate this colony which had been won from the Spanish after the Seven Years War and to turn it into a profitable enterprise. Their plan was to transport a number of Greeks to Florida and to engage them in the production of cotton, indigo, and other semi-tropical crops. Turnbull, a physician, named the settlement New Smyrna in honor of his Greek wife.

New Smyrna failed to evolve into the semi-tropical paradise promised by

Turnbull. Cursed by malaria, mosquitoes, and the ever-present threat of starvation, the colony was more a prison than an utopia. Turnbull was a ruthless dictator, whose drive for profit led him to sacrifice the comfort and rights of his colonists. He became involved in a foolish political struggle with Governor Patrick Tonyn, the representative of the British crown in St. Augustine, which led the governor to seek every opportunity to destroy New Smyrna. Turnbull failed to fulfill his promises to the Greeks, for he had told them that he would provide them with a Greek Orthodox priest to minister to their spiritual needs, yet he made no effort to do so. Instead the people were forced to turn to Father Pedro Camps and two other Roman Catholic priests who had accompanied a group of Minorcans in Turnbull's expedition. The physician also brought many more people to the plantation than he had provisions for, and as a result, he was partially responsible for the death of almost 500 people during their first year. Indeed, conditions in New Smyrna were so poor that Turnbull had to call on the colonial authorities to send troops to quell a revolt that broke out during the first year. Finally, the chaos which accompanied the American Revolution brought an end to New Smyrna in June and July of 1777.

While Turnbull was in England, appealing to higher authorities in his conflict with Governor Tonyn, the settlers left the plantation and migrated to St. Augustine. They remained there after the British authorities departed when Spain regained Florida following the American Revolution. Eventually, the Greeks merged with the other people of St. Augustine. Today, the only legacy of New Smyrna is the many Greek names of the people of St. Augustine.

E.P. Panagopoulos has done the student of American history a very valuable service by chronicling the exciting story of the tragedy of New Smyrna. His research is of the highest scholarly caliber, for he utilized materials from archives in England, Minorca, Spain, France, Italy, and the United States, as well as many other primary and secondary sources. Panagopoulos writes in a clear and interesting manner and has made every effort to produce a work of interest to both the specialist and the more casual student of history. Unfortunately, the author was unable to provide his readers with more insight into the private lives of the settlers. However, despite this problem, *New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey* is a welcome and important addition to the literature on early American history. All too often historians ignore the contribution to American history of the non-English settlers. This book is an effort to overcome this limitation, and for this reason, it is a very valuable work that should not be ignored.

Warren B. Morris, Jr.  
Holy Cross



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on earlier stages in the dialogue." Both men keenly state that "this formulation carries only the authority of the Commission which produced it."

Colin Davey, writing in a strictly historical and condensed form, says that "the aim of the present paper is to give a sufficient account of the official contacts and conversations between Anglicans and Orthodox from 1920 onwards."

The theological conversations which began in 1920 form the background and have prepared the way for the beginning of their newer and later phase from 1960. The visit of Dr. Michael Ramsey, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, in the spring of 1962 to the Ecumenical Patriarchate opened "a new chapter in Anglican-Orthodox relations." The context and the climate of the 1960's were very different from the inter-war period. Presently, the conversations have been entrusted upon a new generation of theologians of the two Churches.

A second paper of similar length and quality is the one written by Kallistos Ware, who describes and analyzes in an objective and positive way the Moscow Conference.

Vasil T. Istavridis

ΠΑΤΡΟΛΟΓΙΑ, Τόμος Α', Εισαγωγή, Β' και Γ' Αιώνας. By Stylianos G. Papadopoulos. Athens, 1977. Pp. 503.

Professor Stylianos G. Papadopoulos, who succeeded Constantine Bonis in the School of Theology, University of Athens, began his academic career publishing his textbook on patrology, which when completed will be more than one volume. The first volume includes the introduction and the study of the Fathers of the first and second centuries.

University students and young theologians gave Professor Papadopoulos the impetus for writing the manual on patrology. In this textbook he tries to understand, to evaluate, and to formulate the personal theological offering of every Father, which when adopted by the Church becomes its Tradition.

Generally speaking, the style of the book appears to be sober and natural, while on many occasions the writer tends to become enthusiastic. The author follows the strict historical and chronological method of presenting his material, which includes every father, teacher, and author of the Church. There are no special chapters or introductions to patristic epochs and schools of thought, or other subdivisions. Those can be found either in the General Introduction or in the first Father of the Church who happens to be connected to those subdivisions. According to the author, "Patrology does not have any limits in history, as it is the case with Church Tradition."

Vasil T. Istavridis

ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΠΤΤΧΙΟΤΧΟΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΩΝ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΩΝ ΣΧΟΛΩΝ, 1941, ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΡΕΤΝΑ. By Vasileios T. Gioultses. Thessalonike: Kyriakides Bros., 1977. Pp. 189. Illustrations.

The appearance of works using the results of empirical sociology for the study of religion is a new phenomenon in Greek Orthodox theology. According to the author, "the sociological estimate of the particular social and professional problems of Greek theologians constitutes the most basic challenge for the preparation of the present study."

Among the Greek graduates of Orthodox theological schools, the author identifies the Greek Orthodox graduates of the universities of Athens, Thessalonike, and of Halke, who are serving in different institutions in Greece, those who are living outside of Greece and are serving as clergymen, and those in institutions of higher learning all over the world.

The author particularly focuses on the problem of theologians who are not working in the field of theology, the entrance of a great number of graduates of theology into the academic hierarchy of their country, the existence of essential information according to which clergymen participate in cultural, social, and athletic clubs, and recently in economic trusts and well-known political schemes as well.

In his questionnaire he asked the opinions of theologians on critical ecclesiastical matters in Greece, such as clerical dress, shortening of holy services, special offers to clergymen, state-Church relations, the civil marriage ceremony, clerical syndicalism, episcopacy, inter-Church relations, Church and anti-institutionalism, and monasticism. The assessment of the answers to these questions is, more or less, positive.

Vasil T. Istavridis

ΟΙ ΡΩΣΟΙ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΟΛΑΤΡΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΟΡΟΥΣ. By Konstantinos K. Papourides. Thessalonike: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1977. Pp. 222. Illustrations.

In 1971 Papourides published a study entitled *'Ονοματολάτραι* (Worshippers of the Name), related to the latest theological dispute of Russian monks on Mount Athos, which has been, with few changes incorporated in the present volume as Part I, "Historical Review." In the second edition there is additional material related to the study under consideration, and drawn from the archives and from some rare publications. An enriched bibliography and a summary in English follow.

The author believes that his work will be of help to international bibliography on the above-mentioned subject.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
*Patriarchal Theological School  
 of Halke*



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## **PROBLEMS CONCERNING AUTOCEPHALY: A RESPONSE**

Bishop Pierre has presented an outstanding paper on the historical and canonical status of autocephaly. In fact, to my knowledge, he has managed in one paper to present all the possible canonical and historical precedents for any contemporary discussion of the nature and origin of autocephaly. The exhaustiveness of his effort has left me, as a respondent, at a disadvantage — there is very little to add or to correct. Having said this, I would, however, like to highlight some of his points which are particularly pertinent to any discussion, to present a somewhat different emphasis on certain of his points, and to draw a conclusion or two from the content of his text.<sup>1</sup>

Before anything else is said, it must be immediately evident to anyone who has heard Bishop Pierre's presentation that there is a significant degree of confusion regarding autocephaly both in the canons and in the historical precedents which have been cited as examples. The very notion of autocephaly, its origin and its structure, is unclear. This problem was recognized in the significant exchange of letters between the Patriarchates of Moscow and Constantinople in 1970 on the question of the autocephaly of what had been the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church in America (Metropolia).<sup>2</sup> In fact, both parties to the exchange in 1970 admitted freely the ambiguity of autocephaly and the significant lack of any specific and unequivocally normative legislation or precedents; yet both parties went on to draw their own more or less specific conclusion from the ambiguous historical precedents. Contemporary Orthodox theological reflection on the nature and source of autocephaly is cast in problematical terms and is largely deracinated. It is precisely this rootless condition of current Orthodox ecclesiology which Bishop Pierre's paper will help to rectify.

Bishop Pierre correctly notes that the question of the manner in which part of an existing Orthodox Church becomes a recognized sister Church has been particularly acute during the past fifty years; this is all the more true for the past ten years during which time the phenomenon of an autocephalous church has arisen in North America. The problem, however, underlying the concept of

autocephaly is not at all new. North America has merely become the occasion for a renewed interest in a fundamental Orthodox ecclesiological problem, which canonists and councils have, for whatever reason, seen fit largely to ignore or, rather, to leave unspecified for almost two thousand years. Although *de facto* autocephalous ecclesiastical entities were created and dissolved, recognized and ignored, no one has seen fit to reflect in depth on this process. This of course has been the fate of ecclesiology in general in Orthodox thought.

For this reason, I think Bishop Pierre has correctly initiated his presentation with a question: "How does one explain the absence of such ecclesiological reflection?" The answer to this question, I believe, will get at the 'roots' of the problems surrounding autocephaly. He begins the search for the answer to this question developmentally from the period of the *pax ecclesiae*, the Constantinian 'revolution,' and notes the existence of several distinct historical periods which were in turn characterized by different ecclesiastical procedures and phenomena. This historical-developmental approach, which is excellent and necessary, has already been outlined by Father Schmemann in an effort to peel away the various layers of ecclesiastical history.

Although Bishop Pierre begins with the Constantinian Age, he extrapolates back to the New Testamental and Apostolic periods to establish his essential frame of reference. It is in this period prior to the *pax ecclesiae* that, I believe, with Bishop Pierre, we must begin to uncover the reality behind the concept of autocephaly. I emphasize this epoch because it is the period during which the Church defined for the most part its own structure, free of imperial exigencies and Eusebian enthusiasm for liaison with the empire. It is the time which will enable us to make sense out of the various contradictory data.

Prior to the so-called imperial period the Church's essential structure, the ecclesiastical boundaries of the various churches, corresponded for practical and in some sense theological reasons to the civil-administrative structure of the Roman Empire, the province. Correspondingly, the number of ecclesiastical provinces increased with the territorial-administrative reforms of the emperor Diocletian (284-305). That this pattern was the norm is clear from early canonical literature such as canon 34 of the Apostolic Canons and is taken up more explicitly in canon 2 of I Constantinople (381).

Since ecclesiastical structures were conformed to civil-provincial

structures as the norm, it was an easy jump to assume, as the Byzantine Orthodox Church did, that the emperor could alter these ecclesiastical boundaries according to pious or political whims. Bishop Pierre correctly concludes that the absence of any discussion about the concept behind autocephaly is due to the intimate association between political and religious elements in the Byzantine period. Certainly the fathers of the famous Photian Synod of 879-880 made this clear when they told the representatives of Pope John VIII that the transfer of Bulgarian ecclesiastical allegiance from Constantinople was not within their province to determine; it was an imperial prerogative.

The absence of the juridical term 'autocephaly' (or of a term denoting a similar notion) from ecclesiastical or conciliar literature until the sixth century at the earliest has been noted by Bishop Pierre and earlier researchers.<sup>3</sup> This absence must have some significance – either the reality behind the term was absolutely self-evident or it was simply unimportant. We must, I believe, opt for the first point, though not for a juridical definition of autocephaly: it seems obvious that autocephaly, as we now use the term, defines the manner in which one church relates to another and the reality behind the term is of the essence of the Church itself.

The basic unit of the Church is the eucharistic community – the people, their bishop, and the table around which they meet and manifest the Church in a particular time and place. This might be termed a eucharistic level, but not yet the level of an autocephalous 'unit.' It is the unit above this, the 'association' of several churches (bishops) on a provincial level to which the word autocephalous is properly applied. Bishop Pierre refers to this as the local church. It should be noted here that Professor Panagiotis Tremperas reacts to such an interpretation. He seems to read it as a denial of any hierarchical or juridical relationship. He takes support for this in the fact that these eucharistic assemblies always prayed for the Church universal.<sup>4</sup> What he seems to be attacking in the context of autocephaly of the Metropolia is not the fact that the local church is defined as the fundamental unit of Orthodox ecclesiology, but the interpretation of this fact solely in terms of eucharistic ecclesiology.

Even though the eucharistic unit was the fundamental unit, it in no way implies that primacies did not exist. As is clear from canon 34 of the Apostolic Canons, the bishops of a province ('nation') are to honor the one who is chief among them; the question then arises as to the nature of this honor or implied primacy. Was it

juridical, as Professor Trempelas seems to feel, or was it honorific? That is, did the bishops of a province recognize the bishop of the civil capital or other important city (such as the one from which they may have received the Faith) simply as a symbol of their unity? Zonaras appears to have this in mind when he interprets canon 34 as an admonition to "the bishops to be of one mind and to be united in the bond of love."<sup>5</sup>

Hence, this primacy was not an exercise of juridical control, but rather a representation of provincial ecclesiastical unity and the purity of the faith. I think the same conclusion is evident in those canons which call for the minimum number of two or three consecrators; the multiplicity of bishops is not to guarantee a juridical passing on of a grace received, but to warrant the faith of the person ordained and the unity of the ecclesiastical province. Thus in its earliest and perhaps most authentic meaning, autocephaly refers not to the submission of the one bishop to another or of a province to a bishop, but applies to the group of churches within a province which is able to guarantee its own integrity and existence. Hence, the question for this period is not whether or not primacies existed, but the nature of the primacies.

Bishop Pierre properly refers to the significance of canon 6 of I Nicaea, which supports this interpretation. The canon speaks not of a new phenomenon, but of exceptions to already existing practices. The norm is still the local provincial unit and the fact that the bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, and Rome operated as if they were metropolitans of several provinces represented an ecclesiastical anomaly which had to be confirmed by the fathers of the councils. The Council granted nothing; it merely legitimized an exception to the common church order.

This same conservative tendency is also evident in canon 2 of I Constantinople and canon 8 of Ephesos. It is noteworthy that the latter canon did not grant independence to the three churches of Cyprus. It rather confirmed the three bishops of the island in their customary procedure of electing their own metropolitan free from the ecclesiastical imperialism of the growing supra-metropolitan jurisdiction of the Church of Antioch. The council did not grant autocephaly; it recognized and secured a fact.

In spite of this conservative tendency of the first three ecumenical councils, the supra-metropolitan jurisdiction of what became the patriarchates continued to grow over adjacent ecclesiastical provinces. The administration of the church came increasingly to be parallel to that of the imperial administration and to reflect

imperial needs. Certainly the most obvious example of this phenomenon is the growth of the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople as it came more and more to reflect in the ecclesiastical sphere the role of the *imperator* in civil affairs. With canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon the autocephaly of the dioceses of Pontos, Thrace, and Asia was reduced, with imperial support, to a mere autonomy. The *status quo* expressed and defended by I Nicaea was inverted. Increasingly, ecclesiastical development took on a supra-provincial character and juridical control of some bishops in the hierarchy by others now characterized the relationship of the Church. The very nature of 'primacy' had changed into a juridical norm.

This so-called imperial period of ecclesiastical Church order complicates our understanding of the nature and source of autocephaly. Autocephaly now became something that was not inherent in the nature of an ecclesiastical province, but something that was 'granted.' During this period, in fact, autocephalous churches, being defined as churches governing themselves and electing and consecrating their own bishops, became the exception. Perhaps the theoretical culmination to this supra-provincial development is the idea of the pentarchic government of the Church Universal as *jure divino*, a view which gained popular and ecclesiastical currency beginning with Novel 131 of Justinian and received its most notable support from St. Theodore the Studite in the early ninth century.

In the late twelfth century, Theodore (IV) Balsamon, Patriarch of Antioch, saw fit to note several significant exceptions to this supra-provincial development. In his commentary on canon 2 of I Constantinople he noted Iberia (Georgia), Justiniana Prima, and Cyprus as exceptions to the contemporary practices. In recognizing these three as legitimate, Balsamon implicitly rejects the absolute nature of the pentarchic theory of church order. He points out that the growth of the great patriarchal sees was due mainly to political and historical factors and not to any divine pattern. In addition, and more to our point, he notes that at one time all metropolitans were autocephalous and were elected and ordained within their provinces. To summarize, a leading canonist of the Byzantine Orthodox Church sees three modes by which autocephaly had come about: 1) by *fait accompli*, or custom, as in the case of Cyprus; 2) by a synodal act of the mother Church, as in the case of Georgia; and 3) by imperial decree, as in the case of

Justiniana Prima. Conspicuously absent from his explication is any reference to the Ecumenical Patriarchate or an ecumenical council.

By the thirteenth century two new factors appeared in the process — the role of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the impulse of nationalist interests. These significant changes have already been noted by Mr. John Erickson.<sup>6</sup> These new factors were largely due to the ecclesiastical chaos resulting from the Latin occupation of much of Byzantine territory after 1204. The exiled Empire at Nicaea was forced for political reasons to use autocephaly as a bargaining tool for exercising its influence and gaining recognition over rival Greek states. Hence in 1219, the Patriarch Germanos (II) granted autocephaly to the Church of Serbia under the Archbishop of Pec, St. Sava. In 1234 the Bulgarian Church was recognized as an independent church under the Patriarch of Trnovo. Both of these moves were objected to by the Archbishop of Ochrid, then within the territory of Epiros, as violating his ecclesiastical prerogatives. With these several actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a new complication is added, and that is the confusion between the actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople as an ecumenical ordinary and as head of a 'mother' church. This, I believe, would have been a valuable area of investigation for Bishop Pierre and may have clarified many later grants or recognitions of autocephaly by the Ecumenical Throne. What is clear is that during this period autocephaly became coterminus with a national boundary, with an independent political reality, with a discrete nationalist consciousness, and with the needs of various Balkan rulers who desired to follow the pattern of their Byzantine archetype, the *Imperator*.

These several levels here outlined cover the various periods and modes of ecclesiastical autocephaly. How autocephalous ecclesiastical entities came into being depends on which period of church order is focused upon as normative for sound church order. Clearly, for the sake of good church order, the question of the source of autocephaly, though not necessarily its nature, belongs on the agenda of the forthcoming great synod. In fact, the place of this problem on the agenda of the synod is one of the few items that both Constantinople and Moscow agreed upon in their exchange of letters in 1970.

If one is looking for specific and unambiguous ecclesiastical precedents and legislation, one will look in vain. The problem must be reduced to its most essential categories, and for that purpose one

must examine the order of the pre-Constantinian Church and the manner in which that Church saw fit to fulfill its mission. Hence, I believe firmly that there is a necessary two-fold approach, an approach which actually represents two sides of the same coin, an approach which is at once ecclesiological and pastoral, ontological and existential. The question, "What is the nature of the Church and what is her fundamental structure?" is existentially related to the question, "What is the mission of the Church?" The distinction between the ontological and existential is purely logical and not necessary. What the Church *is* is immediately related, by virtue of God's Incarnation, to what the Church is supposed to be doing in the world.

It is hoped that the chaos of North American Orthodoxy will provide the occasion for the clarification of the questions of autocephaly, not as a juridical issue of which rights belong to which party, but precisely as an ecclesiological and pastoral problem. That is, which approach will enable the various Orthodox Churches in North America to be free to be the Church, to do Christ's will, to proclaim His Gospel both to native and to foreign-born Americans. The solution will not be simple and unambiguous, however, and Bishop Pierre is correct in enumerating previous problematic cases. One thing, however, is absolutely clear: whatever canons we select, whatever the historical precedents we refer to, and whatever the period we choose to focus upon, North American Orthodoxy represents a unique ecclesiastical phenomenon in Orthodox history. This fact calls for changes in the attitudes both of American Orthodox and of the mother churches. It is in this area that some historical elucidation would have been valuable from his Grace. The role of the people is often overlooked by historians, particularly by historians of the Church; it would have been interesting if Bishop Pierre had investigated what part, if any, the populations of the areas played in achieving autocephaly. I raise this issue in closing because it seems to me that in North America the role of the people will be significant in determining exactly what actions the various mother churches take in working out a solution to the North American ecclesiastical dilemma. I believe that in addition to a meeting of ecclesiastical norms, there must be what can be called a 'will to autocephaly' on the part of the Orthodox in North America.

## NOTES

1. The only contemporary critical material on the question of the structure and origins of autocephaly tends to be the materials produced relating immediately to the 'autocephaly' of the Orthodox Church in America. That autocephaly was proclaimed by a patriarchal *tomos* 10 April 1970, by Patriarch Alexis of Moscow. Cf. for instance Alexander Schmemann, "A Meaningful Storm: Some Reflections on Autocephaly, Tradition and Ecclesiology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 15 (1971), 3-27; John Erickson, "Autocephaly in Orthodox Canonical Tradition to the Thirteenth Century," *SVTQ*, 15 (1971), 28-41; Alexander Bogolepov, *Towards an American Orthodox Church* (New York, 1963); and Panagiotes N. Tremperas, *The Autocephaly of the Metropolia in America*, edited and translated by G. Bebis, R. Stephanopoulos, and N. Vaporis (Brookline, Mass., 1973).

2. Cf. the "Letter of Patriarch Athenagoras to Metropolitan Pimen," section 5, in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 15 (1971), 64; and the "Letter of Patriarch Alexis to Patriarch Athenagoras," section 2, *SVTQ*, 15 (1971), 58.

3. Cf. for instance, Schmemann, pp. 7-9; and Erickson, 28-29.

4. Tremperas, p. 34.

5. Rhalles and Potles, *Syntagma*, 2, p. 46.

6. Erickson, pp. 36-39.



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## PROBLEMS CONCERNING AUTOCEPHALY

The controversies which periodically have been arising for some fifty years within the Orthodox world concerning the establishment of new autocephalous entities have shown plainly that disagreements exist on the process whereby this status is attained. To a certain degree some differences of understanding as to the very nature of autocephaly—or more exactly as to its implications—also have been implicit. To end once and for all uncertainty and misunderstandings, it has been wisely decided that the future Pan-orthodox council should examine this question, which has been inscribed on its agenda in the following way: "Autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed." In addition, three other points on the council's program have a certain connection with this theme, namely: (1) "The Orthodox diaspora," (2) "The diptychs," and (3) "Autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed."

In order that truly churchly answers be given to these questions, it is necessary first of all that research be made on a scientific basis and in an irenic spirit. The present report would like to be a modest contribution to the study of the question of autocephaly.

A few preliminary remarks are in order. If debates concerning autocephaly have been frequent and sometimes heated during the last decades, the problem is far from being new. One can state with assurance that it has come up frequently since the fourth century, i.e., from the time when ecclesiastical structures of co-ordination were made official by the provisions of the Church's *jus scriptum* whereas previously the structural forms accepted by common law retained more flexibility and malleability. The profound modifications which occurred during the fourth century in relations between the catholic Church and the Roman state, along with the emergence of what Germanic scholars call the 'Reichskirche,' very early had repercussion for the relations between Christian groups outside the Empire and their mother churches on imperial territory. However, neither then nor later

in the Middle Ages was the theme of autocephaly made the object of study on the part of canonists, even though the establishment of independent ecclesiastical entities has often created some serious tensions. How can we explain this absence of investigation of a question which repeatedly has come up and raised difficulties? Several tightly overlapping causes were without doubt at the origin of this lack. During the whole period of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, there was an intermingling of the political and religious spheres. If on several points the law indicated a line of demarcation, not always respected, however, between the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical powers and the prerogatives of the imperial power, the Eastern Church accepted whether explicitly or tacitly the existence of a mixed domain in which the state in fact played a preponderant role. This was notably the case in the formation and the demarcation of ecclesiastical districts. Not without reason the Byzantine government considered that adherence to the patriarchal jurisdiction of Constantinople represented an important factor of political and cultural influence in bordering on more distant countries. Such an attitude was not dictated exclusively by immediate preoccupations or petty motivations. It was situated in the context of a political philosophy well studied by Byzantinists. The *basileus* was certainly not considered as the head of the Church, but he was regarded as having received from Christ the responsibility of governing the *oikoumene* in His name, and to a certain point this ideology was accepted in the countries located in the religious and cultural orbit of Byzantium.<sup>1</sup> One will agree that this state of affairs did not create conditions favorable to a purely canonical approach to the question of autocephaly.

In the Byzantine period, a noun designating the state of autocephaly is not to be found. Later, in modern Greek, the adjective in the neuter preceded by the article will be used: *τό αὐτοκέφαλον*. The adjective itself is not to be found in dictionaries of the classical language. It appears in the high Byzantine period. The word is formed in a completely normal manner using the noun *κεφαλή*, 'head,' and the pronominal adjective *αὐτός*, 'itself.' This sort of morphological composition is very frequent and lends itself to a variety of applications in Greek as well as in other languages which use the grammatical element *auto* to form new words. The general sense of the term is easily understood: 'having its own head,' or 'self-directing.' This adjective belongs exclusively to legal language

and as such indicates a person in a government position or an institution *sui juris*. It is thus that the term is found in Latin.<sup>2</sup> In several texts its significance is made more precise by a synonym or explained by a phrase. In his *De administrando imperio*, Constantine Porphyrogenetos applies it to cities and populations dependent neither on the *basileus* nor on any other sovereign, and he explains it precisely by the expression: *τινί μή ὑποκείμενοι* and by the adjective *ἰδιόρυθμοι*.<sup>3</sup> Further, in the same work a prince is mentioned who ruled *αὐθεντῶς καὶ κυρίως ὡς δεσπότης καὶ αὐτοκέφαλος*.<sup>4</sup>

Applied to ecclesiastical matters, the word appears in the sixth century in the work of Theodore the Lector to explain the situation of the metropolitanate of Cyprus, whose inhabitants did not want to be under the jurisdiction of Antioch (*μή τεχεῖν ὑπό Ἀντιόχειαν*).<sup>5</sup> In canonical literature of the Byzantine period, the term is used with two very different meanings. It is used to explain the status of certain hierarchs not dependent on the metropolis of the province in which their seat was located, but responsible only to the patriarch directly. These heads were called ‘autocephalous archbishops’.<sup>6</sup> This term could have caused confusion in that here the noun ‘archbishop’ does not correspond to its former use, and the adjective is not used in its obvious sense. In fact the context removed all ambiguity. Moreover, the expression fell into disuse in the thirteenth century and never reappeared again. In the later Middle Ages, the Byzantine bishops dependent directly on the patriarch were called metropolitans whether they had suffragans or not.<sup>7</sup>

Let us now turn to the word autocephalous in the sense we are using it in this paper, i.e., the adjective as used in its proper sense, conforming to etymology and established usage. In the twelfth century the notion of canonical independence that autocephaly implies is well indicated by Nilos Doxapates. Speaking of Cyprus and taking up the explanation of Theodore the Lector who connected the recognition of ecclesiastical independence of the island with the discovery of the relics of St. Barnabas, he declares that “it has stayed completely autocephalous” (*αὐτοκέφαλος παντελῶς*), not being under the authority of any of the major sees but mistress of herself (*αὐτεξούσιος*). Discussing also the canonical status of Bulgaria, he does so in almost the same terms, adding the specification that ordinations were accomplished by the bishops of that country alone.<sup>8</sup> Here we touch upon the fundamental point

of autocephaly, what distinguishes this status from all others. It is Balsamon, discussing canon 2 of the Second Ecumenical Council, who explains briefly but clearly what autocephaly means in the strict canonical sense. A passage of this canon stipulated: “ . . . it is evident that the council of the province will direct the affairs of each province, in accordance with what has been decided at Nicaea.”<sup>9</sup> Balsamon notes “that, according to the present rule, formerly all the heads of provinces were autocephalous and were elected by their respective synods.”<sup>10</sup> Thus, although the Byzantine canonists had not studied autocephaly under all its aspects, there existed a true consensus as to what constituted its basic element. Autocephaly consists then precisely and uniquely in the fact that all the bishops of a territory are elected and consecrated by the episcopal college of that territory and that the primate — *primaes sedis episcopus* according to official canon terminology<sup>11</sup> — does not need to receive his investiture from any other primate. The functioning of such a system in the church antedates the appearance of the word ‘autocephaly.’ Rather, from ecclesiastical experience based on Tradition and ratified in written law, recourse subsequently is had to that word in order to express an existing reality.

Let us add that this system was common in the universal Church. In the West, where the canons of Nicaea were held in particular esteem, it was applied until it atrophied under the action of centralization. In the ninth century the acceptance of pallium by the archbishops was considered as the indispensable condition for the exercise of metropolitan prerogatives.<sup>12</sup> The evolution of things was very different in the East, in that centralization developed there but in another way. Today, when Orthodox people speak of ‘local churches’ (*τοπικαὶ ἐκκλησίαι*), they usually mean autocephalous or autonomous ecclesiastical entities. But it should be noted that in the terminology of the New Testament the word ‘church’ either designates the totality of people of God or a particular community. It is never used in the singular to designate the group of communities of a region. Thus, for example, the Apostle Paul mentions in the plural the *churches* of Galatia, of Asia, or Macedonia, or Judaea.<sup>13</sup> This scriptural data is obviously not the result of chance. It expresses a profound spiritual reality: The church in each community is the sacramental manifestation of ecclesial plenitude. In such a perspective, opposition between ‘local ecclesiology’ and ‘universal ecclesiology’ is stripped of meaning because the Church in its entirety is none other than the as-

sembly of local churches, but each one of these would be nothing outside of the communion of the whole. Ancient Christian literature generally follows this double way of using the word 'Church.' Very typical is the address of the *Martyrdom of St. Polycarp*: "The Church of God which sojourns at Smyrna to the Church of God which sojourns at Philomelion and to all the communities in each place of the holy and catholic Church . . . "<sup>14</sup> It is extremely important to point out that this is the manner of expression of all Orthodox canonical documents during the first nine centuries. Thus, for example, the Fathers of the Third Ecumenical Council do not speak of the episcopate of the Church of Cyprus but of "the heads of the holy churches of Cyprus."<sup>15</sup>

During the Middle Ages this precise terminology did not last, and we see a canonist like Balsamon speak of the 'Church of Iberia.' He uses a similar expression for Bulgaria and Cyprus.<sup>16</sup> It would be very exaggerated to see in this semantic shift proof of a profound alteration of ecclesiology. It means, nevertheless, a certain tendency to regard the autocephalous entity as the essential structure of the universal Church, and the dioceses as simple administrative subdivisions. What is certain, in any case, is that the study of problems relating to autocephaly cannot be made independently without considering the idea of the local church. This structure is in fact the only one which has had and will have an unshaken existence, because it is linked to the episcopal nature of ecclesiastical organization. It is in terms of the local church and its structure that a great number of canonical stipulations reflecting the principles of Orthodox ecclesiology are laid down and understood. The ancient canonical documents which deal with means of coordination in the universal Church attack this question in strict connection with the question of the local church. The ancient history of the development of autocephalous districts is placed in the framework of establishing links between the local churches. That is what we would like to examine at this time.

If each local church formed a coherent whole which St. Cyprian described in his famous phrase: "plebs sacerdoti adunata et pastori suo grex adhaerens,"<sup>17</sup> they maintained between them close relations which did not have special significance except when litigious cases necessitated a more or less broad opinion. The choice and the consecration of a bishop required the presence and the participation of several neighboring bishops.<sup>18</sup> Now there is no doubt that from a very early age the opinion of the bishop from the largest city (*amplior civitas*) was clothed with particular import-

tance. Such an influence appeared all the more normal in that generally it was starting from these centers that the Gospel message had spread. The bishops of these mother churches played a preponderant role in the positions taken by the heads of the neighboring churches of an area more or less extended but usually corresponding to the civil boundaries. These groupings can be observed especially during the Quarto deciman controversy and the quarrel concerning the rebaptism of heretics. The administrative reform undertaken by the emperor Diocletian (284-305) had an important repercussion in ecclesiastical organization: the multiplication of provinces by splitting up gave rise to less broad territorial units, thus facilitating *de facto* the establishment of ecclesiastical organization based upon these administrative units.<sup>19</sup> Within this framework the primary functions of the bishop of the chief town of the province took shape. This person begins to be called *μητροπολίτης ἐπίσκοπος* or in short *μητροπολίτης*.<sup>20</sup> His essential prerogatives are to call and to preside over the synods of his province and especially to supervise the regularity of the election of bishops. The Fathers of Nicaea ratified these customs, entering them into written law so that they might become the established norms for the universal church.

Canon 4 stipulates: "It is proper that a bishop be set up by all the other bishops of the province, but if that is difficult because of urgent necessity or travel time, then at least three should come together, and receiving the consent in writing of the absent bishops, they may proceed to the ordination. The confirmation (*τό κῦρος*) of what has been done is referred in each province to the metropolitan bishop."<sup>21</sup> It is on the basis of this reference to canon 4 of Nicaea on the part of the Fathers of the Council of Constantinople of 381 that Balsamon observed, as we have already stated, that in those times metropolitan districts enjoyed autocephaly. This status was the rule for those districts which, except for the derogations mentioned by canon 6 of Nicaea, coincided with the limits of the civil provinces, an arrangement which has been called "the principle of accommodation" by Fr. Dvornik.<sup>22</sup> Such an adaptation to administrative geography was done only for reasons of convenience and did not claim a doctrinal basis. Whence springs the fact that exceptions duly indicated were accepted out of respect for "ancient customs." The purely pragmatic character of this sort of organization is confirmed in canon 9 of the Council of Antioch: "The bishops of every province must recognize the

bishop who presides over the metropolis and who has to take thought for the whole province, for it is to the metropolis that those from all parts who have business to discuss come. That is why it seemed fitting that he also have precedence in rank. . . .”<sup>23</sup> This system is strictly territorial. If attempts were made later to justify an ecclesiastical organization following national criteria, invoking the Apostolic Canon 34 which states: “The bishops of each *nation* must acknowledge him who is the first among them . . . ,”<sup>24</sup> this is based upon a misunderstanding of the text. The Greek word *ἔθνος* signifies here “population of a territory” and has no national connotation, as Orthodox scholars of widely different orientation have agreed.<sup>25</sup> This point is decisively confirmed by the expression used by the historian Sozomen when he recounts the stipulation of the Council of Constantinople concerning the competence of the provincial synod, which he calls *τοῦ ἔθνους σύνοδον*.<sup>26</sup> The term *ethnos* is used here as a metonymy for the word *eparchia*.

The correspondence between civil provinces and metropolitan districts could sometimes give rise to delicate problems, because the civil provinces did not necessarily constitute fixed entities. What was one supposed to do in the ecclesiastical district when a civil province was cut in two? That is what happened in 372 with Cappadocia. A new province was formed in which Tyana became the capital. Immediately Anthimos, the bishop of this new see, stopped considering himself as the suffragan of Basil of Caesarea, and he rallied to his viewpoint several comprovincial bishops. St. Basil, far from accepting this situation, tried to reinforce his position of primacy in Cappadocia Secunda. It is under these circumstances that he created an episcopal seat at Sasima, an insignificant town, and wanted to install Gregory of Nazianzos there.<sup>27</sup> Faced with problems of this sort, the Church adopted a nuanced attitude which is reflected in its legislation: it disapproved the maneuvers of ambitious bishops who petitioned the public powers to have their city raised to the rank of metropolis so that they could enjoy the title and prerogatives of metropolitan<sup>28</sup> but it confirmed, on the other hand, that the principle of accommodation become the general rule. In the West the papacy was more reserved on this point. Innocent I (402 - 417), writing to Alexander of Antioch, categorically affirmed that the Church is not obliged to form metropolitan districts based on civil provinces when the limits of the civil provinces undergo modification.<sup>29</sup> This

opinion was not universally shared by the western episcopate, as one can readily prove.<sup>30</sup>

From a very early time, episcopal sees of very large cities exercised an influence over large areas, and this was expressed in the first place by control of episcopal elections. The trend which evolved after the administrative reform of the Emperor Diocletian, making metropolitan districts coincide with civil provinces, threatened to question the prerogatives of these major sees. Considerations of this kind especially threatened the authority of the bishop of Alexandria. That is why the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council who ratified as a general rule the policy of accommodation did not want this rule to interfere with established rights. “Generi per speciem derogatur.”<sup>31</sup> This judicial axiom applies exactly to canon 6 of Nicaea, which stipulates that the privileges of the bishop of Alexandria must remain intact; and in order to demonstrate the firm basis for this decision, the Fathers of the council not only stressed the antiquity of the state of affairs but also mentioned that the bishop of Rome as well as the bishop of Antioch enjoyed similar privileges. The departure from custom pointed out and approved by this canon emphasizes the fact that metropolitan powers of the bishop of Alexandria, patterned after those exercised by the bishops of Rome and Antioch, extended over an area which was vaster than a single civil province. This was not a question of a supra-metropolitan jurisdiction, as later has been believed.<sup>32</sup> The Fathers of Nicaea would have preferred that these exceptions be strictly limited to the three sees aforementioned, and that everywhere else the civil province be the normal framework for episcopal elections and resolution of current business. That is why, after having recognized the legitimacy of the rights of Alexandria, and corresponding to these, the privileges of Rome and Antioch, they hastened to add: “and that in the other provinces the prerogatives of the metropolitan churches should be safeguarded.”<sup>33</sup> So also, while remembering that the bishop of Aelia, i.e., Jerusalem, had an honorary status, they nevertheless specified that the rights of the metropolitan of the province should remain intact.<sup>34</sup>

Very quickly, however, the appearance of conflicts would show that it was not always possible to regulate disciplinary problems within the framework of the province. A few years after Nicaea, the Council of Antioch tried to find a compromise solution: the provincial framework would remain the usual rule, but an enlargement was provided for the judgment of bishops in the second

instance.<sup>35</sup> For the same situation, the council meeting at Sardica, very probably in 343, envisaged a complicated procedure involving the intervention of the Roman see.<sup>36</sup> The council which was held at Constantinople in 382 went in the same direction as the Council of Antioch but stipulated that the synodal tribunal of the second instance be composed of bishops from the same civil diocese (*μείζων σύνοδος τῶν τῆς διοικήσεως ἐπισκόπων*).<sup>37</sup>

In the preceding year, the Fathers of the synod, which was subsequently considered as the Second Ecumenical Council, had already mentioned the civil dioceses, apparently in some way meaning by this phrase ecclesiastical divisions. If one reads carefully the text of the council of 381, one sees that civil dioceses are mentioned as the *de facto* framework of ecclesiastical life, and yet this reference occurs only with respect to a prohibition: the episcopate of one diocese is not to interfere in the affairs of another diocese. The positive element of the canon is only a reiteration of the decisions of Nicaea, so that it is the province and not the diocese which constitutes an autocephalous entity.<sup>38</sup> The rule concerning jurisdiction promulgated by the council of the following year—an assembly formed mostly of the same participants—is strictly in line with the text of 381: the members of the synodal tribunal of the second instance, in order to constitute a *μείζων σύνοδος*, should belong to the episcopate of the diocese. This is a supplementary precision vis-à-vis canon 14 of Antioch, which had declared simply that bishops called to sit with their colleagues were to come “from the neighboring province.” The tendency to form ecclesiastical units encompassing several provinces was implicit in the canons of the Councils of Constantinople of 381 and 382. The major sees, i.e., those that were universally regarded as centers of communions sought to control in their respective zone of influence the elections of the metropolitans, which meant for the provinces the loss of their autocephaly.

For Alexandria the problem did not arise, since the archbishop of this city already directly exercised metropolitan rights over a vast territory which constituted, even before the word was used, a patriarchate. It is more difficult to discover exactly how the process of supra-metropolitan jurisdiction started in the Diocese of the East. We have no certainty concerning the geographic extent of the metropolitan jurisdiction of Antioch in the fourth century. All we can be sure of is that it surpassed the limits of Coelo-Syria. But by the end of the century canon 6 of Nicaea was understood as having granted supra-metropolitan authority to the

bishop of Antioch over all the Diocese of the East. Such was the opinion of Jerome in 396/397; the same interpretation is found several years later with Pope Innocent.<sup>39</sup> The bishops of Antioch did not succeed, however, in establishing firmly their superior jurisdiction over the whole of the diocese: the see of Jerusalem not only became free little by little from the metropolitan tutelage of Caesarea, but at the beginning of Juvenal's episcopate (therefore before 431) was assured supra-metropolitan jurisdiction over all Palestine, which was then comprised of three provinces.<sup>40</sup> Juvenal tried to extend it to Phoenicia. The Council of Chalcedon arbitrated the dispute; it guaranteed the supra-metropolitan rights of the see of Jerusalem while limiting them to the three Palestinian provinces.<sup>41</sup>

On the administrative plane, the island of Cyprus was a part of the Diocese of the East; that is why the Church of Antioch asserted its right of control over the election of the metropolitan of this island province. The claim of Antioch was based upon canon 6 of Nicaea as it was interpreted in the fifth century. The Cypriot episcopate strongly opposed these aims and approached the Council of Ephesus to have the merit of its position recognized. The bishops affirmed that Cyprus had always enjoyed freedom in episcopal ordinations. The Fathers of the council found themselves, under these circumstances, in a delicate position, since John of Antioch, challenging the legitimacy of this assembly directed by Cyril of Alexandria, did not participate in its deliberations. Prudently the Council of Ephesus, at the time of its final session, 31 July 431, decided in favor of the bishops of Cyprus, contingent upon the correctness of the Cypriots' assertion of the antiquity of the custom according to which they proceeded to elect their head without the intervention of the see of Antioch. The Fathers of the council used this occasion to set forth a general rule. Hence the second part of the approved resolution. Here is the tenor of the text:

The same thing will be also observed in the other dioceses and throughout the provinces, so that none of the bishops beloved of God may seize another province which has not been formerly and since the beginning under his authority or that of his predecessors, and if someone should seize a province and forcibly put it under his authority, let him return it, lest the canons of the Fathers be infringed upon and under the pretext of piety the pride of worldly power slip in, so that at our own instiga-

tion we lose little by little the freedom which our Lord Jesus Christ gave us by his own blood. It therefore has appeared good to the holy ecumenical council to safeguard for each province the pure and inviolate rights acquired from the beginning and established according to age-old custom. Each metropolitan will have the option of taking a transcript of these acts as a guarantee for himself. If someone should produce an ordinance contrary to what has now been defined, the entire holy and ecumenical council decides that it shall be null and void.<sup>42</sup>

This resolution is significant; it represented an attempt to check the process of jurisdictional centralization by which the great sees tried to suppress the autocephaly of the provinces.

The Fathers of the general council of 381, wanting to end the inopportune interventions of the see of Alexandria in the ecclesiastical affairs of the whole eastern part of the empire and in particular in the business of the new capital, had formulated the policy of non-intervention of the episcopate of one diocese into another and added a very brief paragraph on the hierarchical situation of the bishop of Constantinople. This passage would later be numbered as a separate canon in the Greek canonical collections.<sup>43</sup> It reads thus: “As to the bishop of Constantinople, he shall have the prerogatives of honor (*τά πρεσβεία τῆς τιμῆς*) after the bishop of Rome, seeing that this city is the New Rome.” This stipulation directed against the hegemony of Alexandria was sufficiently imprecise about the stated prerogatives to give rise to divergent interpretations. By the decision of the council of 381, the entrance of Constantinople among the major sees of Christendom was assured. This ascent had been delayed until then because of the heterodox attitude of the majority of bishops during the Arian crisis and also because of the political vicissitudes of the city since its founding by the Emperor Constantine.<sup>44</sup> Contrary to Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, the see of Constantinople obviously could not rely upon “ancient customs” to establish its jurisdiction over the surrounding territories. However, in a few decades the bishops of the New Rome succeeded in solidly establishing their primatial position in the three civil dioceses of Thrace, Pontos and Asia. These advances often met with lively resistance since metropolitan organization was solidly implanted, but on the other hand they were also facilitated by the fact that the diocesan structure had no consistency on the ecclesiastical level.<sup>45</sup>

Profiting from a favorable turn of events during the Fourth Ecu-

menical Council in 451, the Archbishop of Constantinople Anatolios, profiting from the firm support of the Emperor Marcian, obtained from a certain number of Fathers the vote of a motion which gave him partial satisfaction. It granted to the Archbishop of Constantinople the right to control in the three dioceses the elections of metropolitans but not those of their suffragans. In addition, he obtained the privilege of controlling the election of bishops in barbarian lands who depended on the above-mentioned dioceses (*ἔτι δε καὶ τοὺς ἐν τοῖς βαρβαρικοῖς ἐπισκόπους τῶν προειρημενῶν διοικησεων*)<sup>46</sup>. In spite of the clear opposition of the Roman legates and in spite of numerous abstentions, this vote was declared legal by the imperial commissioners.<sup>47</sup> It is not our task here to examine all the implications of this text, let us be content to pick out what concerns our subject directly. This decision signified that the provinces of the three dioceses would lose their autocephaly but would keep a state of autonomy, since it was the duty of the metropolitans to confirm the election of comprovincial bishops.

Thus with the Council of Chalcedon a process of centralization came to an end in the East, having resulted in the formation of large ecclesiastical divisions whose primates would soon be called patriarchs. This structuring reversed the canonical data envisaged by the Fathers of Nicaea. Indeed for them the idea of supra-metropolitan jurisdiction was completely unknown, they considered the autocephaly of each province as the norm to which there were only very rare exceptions, well-known and duly based on "ancient customs". This was also the position of the Council of Constantinople in 381. The Fathers of Ephesos in 431 wanted to stop the process of absorption of the provinces, but this process was already too far advanced to be effectively checked. Even their timely decision about Cyprus was not sufficient to stop the see of Antioch's attempts at intervention. If Cyprus was able to preserve its autocephaly, this was due to its insularity and the stubbornness of its inhabitants.<sup>48</sup>

Parallel to the historical process of formation of the five patriarchates was development of the idea of a hierarchical order (*ταξις*) of the great sees. From the first century, after the fall of Jerusalem, the Church of Rome, inasmuch as this city was the capital of the empire and also in memory of the martyrs Peter and Paul, enjoyed exceptional authority in the harmony of the local churches. The episcopal sees of the other principal centers of the empire, Alexandria and Antioch, where Christianity had implanted

itself during the age of the Apostles, enjoyed special prestige. The situation of the Church of Jerusalem was different. After the crushing of the revolt of Bar-Kochba in 135, a pagan city called Aelia Capitolina had been built on its site. The capital of the province of Palestine was Caesarea, whose bishop enjoyed metropolitan prerogatives, but the bishop of Aelia had the right to special privileges because of the religious significance of the Holy City for Christians. The see of Jerusalem had an importance which reached far beyond Palestine. Eusebios, although himself metropolitan of Caesarea, gives in his *Ecclesiastical History* a detailed list of bishops of the Holy City, as he did for Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch.<sup>49</sup>

The Council of Nicaea was not at all concerned with establishing a hierarchy of the major sees. However, Alexandria, because of its population, its economic situation and its cultural diffusion as the greatest city in the eastern part of the empire, inevitably felt repercussions on its ecclesiastical position. Further, close ties existed between the sees of Rome and Alexandria. In short, without needing legislation on this subject, the Alexandrian Church occupied *de facto* the second place in Christendom. One could infer that Antioch occupied the third place, but for a long time this deduction was not made, at least openly. The appearance of a ἀντίρρηπον Πώμης on the shores of the Bosphorus did not immediately modify relations between the great sees. The situation changed with the advent of the Emperor Theodosios in 379: Orthodoxy triumphed in Constantinople which, moreover, became the usual place of residence of the sovereign. The council of 381 recognized that the bishop of this city should have the place of honor immediately after the bishop of old Rome. The history of the Church from that moment to the time of the Council of Chalcedon was greatly marked by the struggle for influence between the sees of Constantinople and Alexandria, each trying to assure its supremacy in the eastern part of Christendom.<sup>50</sup> The facts are well known, and we do not want to weigh down our exposé by relating them. Let it suffice to mention the most characteristic: at the Robber Council of Ephesos in 449 Dioscoros occupied the first place and directed the proceedings while Flavian held the fifth place, which revealed the non-recognition by the Egyptian of the decision of the council of 381. Dioscoros was even described by Olympias of Evaza as ecumenical archbishop.<sup>51</sup> Taking into account these precedents, it is certain that the motion adopted at Chalcedon concerning the privileges of Constantinople was not

directed against the primacy of Rome. It was clearly asserting the priority of the see of Constantinople in the face of the hegemonist pretensions of Alexandria.

The pentarchical principle in the government of the universal Church coupled with a hierarchical order of the patriarchal sees appears as the fundamental basis of ecclesiastical organization in the religious legislation of the Emperor Justinian. It is also certain that the second place, occupied by the see of Constantinople because of the position of this city as capital of the empire, implied a special responsibility that the other three sees which followed did not have to the same degree. That stands out clearly in the way that this passage of Novella 131 is written: "We decree . . . that the most holy pope of ancient Rome is the first of all pontiffs, the most blessed archbishop of Constantinople, the new Rome, holds the second rank after the holy apostolic throne of old Rome, having preeminence over all the others."<sup>52</sup> Canon 36 of the Council in Trullo introduces the same nuance in the ranking of the sees: "Renewing the legislation of the 150 Holy Fathers who gathered in this imperial city guarded by God, and the 630 who gathered at Chalcedon, we decree that the see of Constantinople shall enjoy the same privileges as the see of Old Rome and shall obtain in ecclesiastical affairs the same grandeur as Old Rome, being second after her; the see of the great city of Alexandria will be counted next, then Antioch and finally Jerusalem."<sup>53</sup>

The pentarchical system presents this peculiarity, that even as it was being raised to the level of canonico-ecclesiastical theory, it was beginning to lose its practical significance. The Church of Alexandria, after 451 shaken by grave tempests related to the Christological controversies, could scarcely exercise a significant influence outside of Egypt. The patriarchate of Antioch, which in the beginning never sought to play a similar role, found itself weakened by these same disputes. With the Arab conquest the division between Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian completed its process of hardening under a denominational form.

Nevertheless the Byzantine people were to remain attached to the patriarchal theory. Religious separation between Rome and Byzantium did not in the least affect the principle on which discussion continued.<sup>54</sup> It follows that outside these five sees, there was never an effort to establish some sort of official "taxis." Greek canonical documents of the Middle Ages do not mention in a fixed order the other autocephalous sees, and eventual patriarchal rank does not become a factor in establishing a priority in the

listing.<sup>55</sup> The numbering in the diptychs is applied exclusively to the five, and then to the four patriarchs of the pentarchy. In 1361-1362 the Ecumenical Patriarch Kallistos affirms this with vigor, referring to canon 28 of Chalcedon and to canon 36 of Quinisext.<sup>56</sup> During the post-Byzantine period the only exception which was made concerned the patriarch of Moscow. The Synodical Tomos of May 1590 specified that the “archbishop of Moscow, Kyr Job, is the fifth patriarch, and has patriarchal dignity and honor; he is listed and counted (*συναριθμήται καὶ μετρήται*) with the other patriarchs.” Further on, it is specified that “he has rank and commemoration (*τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὸ μνημόσυνον*) after the patriarch of Jerusalem.”<sup>57</sup> It is to be noted that this numerically renewed pentarchy was effected by an addition which did not modify the preexistent orders, since the see entering this category was given hierarchical position after Jerusalem.

As we have seen, originally autocephaly, even before the term made its appearance, implied only the right of bishops in a determined territory to elect and to consecrate (the verb *χειροτονεῖν* initially refers to both these two phases) their colleagues, including the first among them. The problem would soon become more complex due to other factors.

Ancient conciliar legislation had conceived of ecclesiastical organization within the geopolitical framework of the Roman Empire. The general council of 381 had simply declared, without great precision: “As to the churches of God which are located among the barbarian nations (*ἐν τοῖς βαρβαρικοῖς ἔθνεσι*), it is important that they be administered according to custom established in the time of the Fathers.”<sup>58</sup> Now dependence vis-à-vis a primatial see situated in Roman territory could sometimes cause political difficulties on account of links between institutional Christianity and the Roman state. The case of Armenia is the oldest example of such a conflict. Gregory the Illuminator had been consecrated at Caesarea in Cappadocia around 294. From that time bishops of this city considered that this fact had created a permanent allegiance. In actual fact the five successors of Gregory were consecrated at Caesarea. From the second half of the fourth century, this jurisdictional dependence displeased the Armenian court because of difficulties that this caused in relations with their powerful neighbors, the Sassanids of Persia, hereditary enemies of the Roman Empire. The decisive event occurred around 373, when King Pap had a new catholicos consecrated without the consent of Caesarea. This brought forth very sharp reaction on the part of

Saint Basil.<sup>59</sup> The growth of Persian influence that was confirmed in 384 by the treaty between Theodosios the Great and Sapor made a return to the *status quo ante* completely inconceivable. In Byzantium, the delicate character of the situation was recognized. Besides, the question of the relations of Armenia with the Church of Caesarea were not couched in the same terms as previously, in that the whole diocese of Pontos was coming more and more into the orbit of Constantinople. Thus this canonical position of Armenia was accepted *de facto*. It was envisaged more as a withdrawal of obedience caused temporarily by the vicissitudes of time than as an irreversible fact.<sup>60</sup> This approach to autocephaly for Christian groups situated outside the limits of the empire was well established in Byzantium, for autocephalies existing *de facto* as well as for those granted in due form. This attitude was dictated by the Byzantines' political philosophy.

The great work of the Greek missionaries in the high Middle Ages, was to gather the people who were living in Eastern Europe into the cultural and religious sphere of Byzantium. Thus Orthodox Christianity played an important role in the emergence of a Bulgarian national consciousness.<sup>61</sup> The way in which Bulgaria gained *de facto* autocephaly is an unusual case that should be recounted briefly. In the ninth century the center of rivalry between Rome and Byzantium, Bulgaria, had seen the contradictory missionary activities of the Greeks and the Westerners. Prince Boris wanted to have a more or less independent ecclesiastical organization as soon as possible. Not having received satisfaction from the papacy, he turned once more to the Byzantine patriarchate, which had thought such a need premature a few years before. This time Patriarch Ignatios granted the request of the Prince and sent an archbishop and bishops into Bulgaria. This took place in 870. Rome took it badly. When reconciliation took place between Patriarch Photios, who had succeeded Ignatios, and the Roman see, Pope John VIII had made the following a condition for recognition of Photios: Photios had to give up all jurisdiction over Bulgaria, which was to return to the Roman patriarchal obedience. Photios accepted and kept his promise.

Thus the two great sees presumed to regulate the matter by going over the head of the interested parties, but this *combinazione* failed because Boris was opposed passively but firmly to returning to the patriarchal obedience of Rome in spite of the dire denunciations of Pope John VIII. In this manner, the Bulgarian archbishop found himself in a state of nondependence vis-à-vis

both Rome and Constantinople. Shortly after, the arrival and residence in the country of the disciples of Saints Cyril and Methodios, driven from Moravia, gave decisive impetus to the cultural Slavization of the Bulgarian state. The Slavo-Bulgarian language became that of the Church and of the state. The close cultural and spiritual connection with the Byzantine world permitted the flourishing of a Slavic civilization deeply marked by the Eastern Christian tradition. The pedagogical role of the Church was preponderant. Thus in this case autocephaly did not constitute simply a mode of canonical organization. It was identified for the first time with a national church. This model was not forgotten.<sup>62</sup> Bulgarian autocephaly was thus created *de facto*. The Byzantines knew how, without renouncing their principles, to live with reality. They had seen this situation coming about without displeasure, as a lesser evil. It seems that they did not recognize Bulgarian autocephaly *de jure* until much later, when an alliance was established between the Byzantine Empire and the Bulgarian state. This took place at the beginning of the reign of Peter in 927. The title of *Basileus* (Tsar) was granted to Peter, and the dignity of patriarch to Damian of Rodostolon, the head of the Church.<sup>63</sup>

This simultaneity shows the close overlapping of political and religious affairs. The same thing happened again in 1235, three centuries later, when the autocephaly of Trnovo was recognized following a treaty concluded between Emperor Theodore II Laskaris and Tsar Asen II of Bulgaria.<sup>64</sup> Given their philosophico-political conception of the unity of the Empire and the axiomatic theory of the pentarchy, the Byzantines were inclined to consider the states which had been formed on the periphery of the Empire at its expense as well as the condition of autocephaly within these states as temporary concessions, juridically revokable. Whence comes the idea of partial autocephaly. If autocephaly is considered in its pure canonical essence, such a notion is absurd. Either an episcopate of a given territory freely elects the bishops of this territory or it does not, in which case there is no autocephaly. The idea of partial autocephaly as conceived in Byzantium nevertheless does not imply a negation of the fundamental right aforementioned, but rather the non-recognition of truly patriarchal prerogatives, which were seen as belonging only to the five patriarchs of the pentarchy. Put in another way, the patriarch of Trnovo, the catholicos of Iberia, the archbishops of Ochrid and of Peć had primatial rights identical to those of the archbishop of Cyprus. This is what Patriarch Kallistos of Constantinople affirmed

categorically in 1361 -1362 concerning the patriarch of Trnovo.<sup>65</sup> For roughly the first five centuries, determination of the limits of the great ecclesiastical units was founded on custom. (*τά ἀρχαῖα ἔθη, συνήθεια . . . καὶ παράδοσις ἀρχαῖα, τὴν κρατῆσασαν ἐπὶ τῶν πατέρων συνήθειαν*).<sup>66</sup>

Byzantine society in the Middle Ages, on the other hand, gave preference to stipulations of the *jus scriptum*, that is to the ecclesiastical canons and to the imperial laws contained in the nomo-canonical collections. That is why, for example, after the Byzantine reconquest, maintenance of the status of autocephaly for the archdiocese of Ochrid will be justified, not as a vestige of Bulgarian ecclesiastical independence, but by establishing a link with the diocese of Justiniana Prima, created in the sixth century by the Emperor Justinian, whose Novella 131 had been inserted into the Basilica and hence represented the law in force.<sup>67</sup>

Regarded from the Middle Ages within a national framework, beyond the limits of the Empire, autocephaly was not thought of as a purely canonical act whether on the part of those who wanted it or on the part of those who granted it. The importance of the Church's role in all aspects of life during this period is a fact; so also the intervention of the emperor does not seem incongruous.

When Saint Sava came to Nicaea in 1220 to ask for ecclesiastical autocephaly for Serbia, it is said in his *zhite* that this request "displeased the patriarch and the emperor." Nevertheless, according to the same source, autocephaly was granted on account of the great friendship the emperor felt for the saint.<sup>68</sup> We see that the decision of the emperor was the determining factor. As to the motivations of Theodore Laskaris, they were not as disinterested as the biography of Saint Sava would have us believe. For the emperor of Nicaea this was a serious blow against the despotate of Epiros, a rival state.<sup>69</sup> The synodal act granting autocephaly and pronounced in the presence of the Emperor was no less irregular, since it violated one of the fundamental principles of law, which is expressed in the axiom: *Nemo plus iuris ad alium transferre potest quam ipse habet*.<sup>70</sup> In fact the autocephaly thus proclaimed had been constituted at the expense of the dioceses of Prizren and of Ras, which were dependent on Ochrid. Since 1217 the archbishop of this see was the eminent canonist Demetrios Chomatianos, who protested vigorously against the patriarch of Constantinople's action in conferring autocephaly on territories not belonging to his obedience. He regarded the ordination of Sava as null and void.<sup>71</sup> The canonical thought of Demetrios was not altogether unam-

biguous, in that at times it is quite marked by cesaropapism. He upheld that the emperor as “*epistemonarch*” (i.e., regulator of ecclesiastical discipline) could intervene with complete right (*νομίμως τε καὶ κανονικῶς*) in the life of the Church since he possessed all the pontifical powers with the exception of that of officiating at worship.<sup>72</sup> It is indisputable that in the business of Serbian autocephaly, even if he was defending his own interests, his position was canonically correct. But when non-ecclesiastical factors did not exist, the exclusive right of a mother church to confer autocephaly was not questioned. Thus in the eleventh century, Georgia, already autonomous, received its autocephaly from the synod of the patriarchate of Antioch.<sup>73</sup>

A complex case of accession to autocephaly was that of Russia. Until the fifteenth century canonical allegiance to the patriarchal see of Constantinople was never seriously questioned. The affair of Clement Smoliatich, who became metropolitan of Kiev in 1147 without the accord of the ecumenical patriarch, should not be over-estimated. It must be understood within the framework of feudal rivalries, and besides this, the election was strongly disapproved of by a part of the episcopate in Russia.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, the development of national sentiment in Moscow in the fourteenth century made it apparent that the sending of Greek prelates to occupy the metropolitan see was less and less appreciated. Further, the decadence of the Byzantine empire was clearly recognized. Nevertheless, the cultural and religious prestige of Constantinople remained great. In addition, there was the weight of long-standing custom, which did not place in question canonical allegiance to the patriarchate.<sup>75</sup> It was the adherence of Isidore to Romanism that brought about his removal from office. The gropings which followed are symptomatic of the confusion which seized the leading element of Muscovite Russia. They hoped to avoid an open rupture with Constantinople while at the same time preserving Orthodoxy. This is why the Grand Duke Vasily Vasilievich wrote in 1441 to Emperor John VIII to ask permission to elect a new metropolitan in Russia, putting forward reasons of a practical nature. This letter was without doubt never sent because it was learned that the unionist party dominated Constantinople. Finally, in December 1448, the council of Moscow brought Jonas, bishop of Riazan, to the metropolitan see.

Before this, at the initiative of the Grand Duke, there was thorough examination of the canonical problem that such an election would cause. In a letter written in 1450 to Emperor Constan-

tine XI, the Muscovite prince explained this initiative, using a very deferential tone and assuring the sovereign of the desire of the Russian Church to remain in communion with Constantinople. This letter was not sent when it was learned that Emperor Constantine XI also upheld Florentine union.<sup>76</sup> Canonically, the action of the Russian bishops was irreproachable. The removal of Isidore and the non-recognition of the unionist Patriarchs Metrophanes II and Gregory III was based on reasons of faith; such an eventuality had been expressly foreseen by the canons 14 and 15 of the 'First-and-Second' Council.<sup>77</sup> Further, the reasons given by the Grand Duke for the designation of a Russian as metropolitan and for his election in that country were by no means futile pretenses. The drawbacks of not knowing the Russian language and the practical difficulties of communicating with Constantinople, arising from the length of the journey, cannot be denied. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 was the event which irrevocably determined the new status of the Church in Muscovite Russia. In this was seen the sign of divine punishment and therefore an *a posteriori* justification for the withdrawal of obedience. The council held in Moscow in 1459 took a position which committed the future by declaring that the successors of Jonas would be the legitimate metropolitans of all Russia.<sup>78</sup> It set forth as a justification the idea that it was impossible to depend on a patriarch who was under the political yoke of the Turks (*v oblasti bezbozhnykh tupok poganago tsaria*).<sup>79</sup> It is interesting that in spite of his admiration for the Greeks, Patriarch Nikon had this motive for the autocephaly of Russia inserted into the edition of the *Kormchaia Kniga* that he sponsored in 1653.<sup>80</sup>

So strong was the tradition of subservience to Constantinople that the legitimacy of Jonas was not entirely accepted in the Russian lands. The bishops of Lithuania, after some hesitation, placed themselves under the jurisdiction of the patriarch. This reversal was certainly not alien to the change of attitude of the Polish-Lithuanian head of state, Casimir IV.<sup>81</sup> Even in Moscow there were challengers, the most famous of whom was Saint Paphnutius of Borovsk.<sup>82</sup>

The situation which existed between 1448 and 1589 had a highly ambiguous canonical character. Constantinople did not officially recognize the metropolitans of Moscow. In 1469 Patriarch Dionysios was not afraid to declare this openly.<sup>83</sup> But as general policy, the issue was not emphasized. There was no question of pronouncing an interdict, because the patriarchate of Constanti-

nople did not want to break with the only Orthodox sovereign. There was always the hope of convincing the Muscovites to return to the *status quo ante*; this was one of the tasks assigned to Maximos the Greek. He was criticized for this reason during his trial in 1531.<sup>84</sup> This situation ended with the establishment of the patriarchate of Moscow by Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah, an act subsequently approved by the other eastern patriarchs.<sup>85</sup> Here we would call attention to the fact that no mention or allusion is made to a regularization of the situation, although indubitably the two sides held different points of view on the matter.

The blossoming of new autocephalies or the reappearance of others which had been suppressed is a phenomenon which marks the history of the Orthodox Church in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the background had been the awakening of nationalities, with repercussions that were sometimes grave for the unity of the Orthodox Church. The most serious case was the long 'Bulgarian schism' (1872 - 1945). Without attempting to analyze the causes, much less to assign responsibility in this painful affair, one must accept its sadly paradigmic significance, in that it challenged the ecclesiastical principle of territorial organization.<sup>86</sup>

Another idea has played an important role in the formation of new autocephalies. It is based on a theory which would integrate ecclesiastical organization into the notion of the sovereignty of states. The independence of a state necessarily implies, according to this theory, ecclesiastical autocephaly for the territory of this state. It is the state that has full right to proclaim this autocephaly and to establish under its control the administrative status of the church. To the religious authorities belong exclusively the domains of dogma and worship. The principal theoretician of this system was Theokletos Pharmakides, born in Larissa in 1784.<sup>87</sup> This conception fit in very well with the prevailing ideas of the period concerning the relationship between church and state. It was but a specific application adapted to Orthodoxy. Since then it has had a pernicious and lasting influence. It was still put forward after the First World War to justify the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in the Polish republic.<sup>88</sup> The decline of this theory has been slow. It is only the complete secularism of the most recent times which regards religion as a private matter, that has dealt a fatal blow to this concept. Vestiges of this theory, however, still exist.

Present uncertainties about the way of proclaiming autocephaly are intrinsically linked to the problem of the very nature of this

status. With good cause the two questions are linked in the agenda of the future Pan-Orthodox council.

In this exposition we have stressed the problem of autocephaly during Christian antiquity and the Middle Ages. For the first of these periods, the reasons for our emphasis are obvious. Without idealizing Christian antiquity, it is certain that canonical praxis then reflected more faithfully than later the principles of a healthy ecclesiology. As for the following period, i.e., the Middle Ages continuing to the sixteenth century, it saw situations which to a certain point served as models for modern autocephalies. This examination has shown us that raw historical data does not furnish a completely worked out response to the problems which arise today. Distillation is necessary to separate the purely canonical notion of autocephaly from extrinsic elements. All correct discussion of this topic must start with a precise understanding of the local church. It is this that springs from the New Testament and from normative tradition of primitive Christianity. Autocephaly is a coordinating structure whose goal is to assure unity of communion of the Church in its universality. Current misunderstandings, while perfectly explainable in the light of historical pressures, arise from an overevaluation of the idea of autocephaly improperly identified with the idea of the local church, whereas in fact autocephaly is only a mode of ecclesiastical organization: the right of the bishops of a specific territory to elect without outside intervention and according to empirical criteria (the principle of accommodation, ancient custom) their colleagues, including their primate. The only peremptory canonical limitation concerns the number of electing bishops, which must be at least three.<sup>89</sup> An autocephalous district thus must include four dioceses, so that, when a see becomes vacant, it can be filled without outside help. This is also the minimal number for forming a synodal tribunal competent in the case of a trial of a bishop, even if this number has sometimes been objected to as insufficient on the basis of the provisions of canon 12 of Carthage.<sup>90</sup>

It seems to us that autocephaly, reduced to what it really is according to canon law, should not pose insurmountable difficulties for getting a Pan-Orthodox consensus on the process whereby that status is attained. History shows us that it has been the interference of non-ecclesiastical factors which often has obscured the canonical consciousness on this point. The indispensable first condition of autocephaly is obviously that there be the appropri-

ate number of dioceses. The other conditions are a matter of convenience. It is necessary that dioceses wanting to form an autocephalous unit should present a certain historical and geographical cohesion. This is because canon law takes into consideration the principle of accommodation, though without absolutizing it. It is up to the mother church, i.e., the see exercising primatial concern for the territory under discussion, to agree to autocephaly. There is in fact no ecclesiologico-canonical basis for another see to deprive the mother church of its primatial jurisdiction in this matter and to confer a right which it does not possess.

History gives us a precious lesson. The refusal of a mother church to confer an autocephaly which was intrinsically justified results inevitably in the interested parties declaring their own autocephaly in a non-canonical fashion. Generally the mother church arrives at a recognition *a posteriori* of the *fait accompli*. On the other hand, history also shows us that finally it is always necessary to petition the mother church to regularize the situation, because under the circumstances the principle expressed by the judicial axiom *Quod initio vitiosum est, non potest tractu temporis convalescere* does not allow any exception.<sup>91</sup> While the right of a mother church to grant autocephaly cannot be questioned, by virtue of its ecclesiastical presuppositions, a future Pan-Orthodox council still could clarify certain procedures relating to concerted action, notably when several mother churches are involved. Concerning the theme of the 'diptychs,' we have stressed its secondary character, insofar as no one challenges the *taxis* of the four patriarchal sees, ratified by canon 36 of the Council *in Trulo* nor the fifth place given to the see of Moscow by the council of Constantinople in 1590 and confirmed in 1593. After this, the other patriarchal sees ought to be mentioned according to the chronological order of their erection and then the other primatial autocephalous sees. In the case of marked uncertainties, the future Pan-Orthodox council will be able, by basing itself on the historico-canonical record, to deliver a decision. Here it would suffice to state the principle without entering into the concrete details of the matter.

We hope that the solution to problems raised by the subject of autocephaly will be found in the spirit of the Tradition, and that this will permit, in a climate of serenity, the strengthening of the collaboration so necessary between the Orthodox.

## NOTES

1 This theory of the universal authority of the *basileus* is expressed and maintained with vigor by Patriarch Anthony IV in a letter addressed to the Grand Duke of Moscow Vasily Dmitrievich, between the years 1394-1397, Miklosich and Müller, *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* 2 (Vienna, 1862), pp 188-92

2 “metropolis ipsorum libera esset ac sui juris” Theodore Lector, 22, PG 86 183

3 *De administrando imperio*, 29, ed Gy Moravcsik (Washington, 1967), p 124 Cf ibid, p 126 Cf also Theophanes Continuatus, (Bonn) 2, p 84

4 Ibid, p 199

5 22, PG 86 184BC

6 See the *Ekthesis* of Epiphanios of Cyprus, ed H Gelzer, *Texte der Notitiae Episcopatuum* (Munich, 1901), p 535

7 Ibid, pp 638-41

8 *Notitia Patriarchatum*, PG 132 1097A

9 V N Beneshevich, *Syntagma XIV titulorum* (St Petersburg, 1906), p 97 In the canon the verb διακεῖν, “to direct,” refers to episcopal ordinations as B Phidas has rightly remarked, *Προνοθεσεις διαμορφωσεως τοῦ θεσμοῦ τῆς πενταρχίας τῶν πατριαρχῶν* (Athens, 1969), pp 150-51

10 Rhalles and Potles, *Syntagma* 2, p 171

11 “Ut primae sedis episcopus non appelletur princeps sacerdotum aut summus sacerdos aut aliquid huismodi sed tantum primitae sedis episcopus” *Reg. ecc. Carthag. excerpta* 39, ed C Munier, *Concilia Africæ Corpus Christianorum* 259), p 185 This series of canons, translated into Greek, entered into the Byzantine collections in the sixth century

12 See Y Congar, *L'ecclésiologie du haut Moyen Age* (Paris, 1968), pp 204-05

13 In the universal sense Mt 16 18, Eph 1 22, 3 10 and 21, 5 23-32, Col 1 18 In the local sense Mt 18 17, Acts 8 1, 9 22, 13 1, II Cor 8 1, Gal 1 2, Rev 1 4, 11, 20, 2 1, 7, 8, 12, 18, 23, 3 1, 7, 14 This enumeration is by no means exhaustive In Acts 9 31, the Western and Antiochian text, which is that of all the Orthodox editions, reads “The churches enjoyed peace in all Judea, Galatia and Samaria” This reading, according to the opinion of most exegetes, seems to be the better one The Alexandrian text has the singular “The church”

14 Ed A. Lelong (Paris, 1927), p 128 (We do not follow the French translation given on p 129) In several passages in his letters St Ignatios speaks of “the Church in Syria,” Eph 21 2, Magn 14, Tral 13 1, Rom 9 1 Further, he calls himself “the bishop of Syria,” Rom 2 1 Without it being possible to give an absolutely certain explication, the similarity with two other passages which mention “the church of Antioch in Syria” (Smyr 9 1), (Letter to Polycarp 7 1) suggests that the term “church of Syria” is equivalent to “church of Antioch” We note in this regard the address of the letter to the Romans “the church which is in charge of affairs in the region of the Romans” (εκκλησία ηγίς καὶ προκάθηται εν τόπῳ χωρίον Ρωμαίων)

15 E Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum* I I 7, p 122

16 Rhalles and Potles, *Syntagma* 2, p 171

17 Ep 66, 8, ed Hartel, p 733

18 The most ancient testimony in this regard is that of the *Apostolic Tradition* See the edition of Dom B Botte, *Sources Chrétiennes* 11 (Paris, 1968), p 40

19 On this administrative reform see A H M Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1964), 1, pp 42-45

20 The long form is solidly attested by canon 4 of Nicaea and is reproduced in the ancient Latin versions, but already it is paralleled by the short form which one finds in canon 6

21 Beneshevich, p 85

22 *Byzance et la primaute romaine* (Paris, 1964), passim

23 Beneshevich, p 256

24 Ibid, p 68

25 Thus S Troitsky, *O tserkovnoi avtokefali* *Zhurnal Mosovskoi Patriarkhii* 1948, no 7, p 41, and Gennadios of Hehopolis, *Ιστορία τοῦ οἰκουμενικοῦ πατριαρχεῖου* (Athens, 1953), p 175

26 *Hist eccl* 7 9, PG 67 1436BC

27 See letters 47, 48, 49 and 50 of St Basil, ed "Les Belles Lettres" (Paris, 1964), 1, pp 60-66 See also ibid pp xi-xiii of the introduction by P Gallay

28 Chalcedon, canons 12 and 17 The first of these canons was linked to the conflict between Photios of Tyre and Eustathios of Beyrouth, alluded to by the Fathers of the council at the time of the nineteenth session, 30 October 451 E Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum II 13* pp 101 10 (460 69)

29 Ep 24 2, PL 20 548B-49A

30 Can 1 of the Council of Turin in 398, ed Ch Munier, *Concilia Galliae IV saec Sources Chretiennes*, 241 (Paris, 1977), pp 136-38

31 *Digests*, 50 17, 80, ed Mommsen and Kruger (Berlin, 1954), p 922

32 See B Phidas, *Προυποθεσεῖς*, pp 90 95

33 E Schwartz, *Der sechste nicaenische Kanon auf der Synod von Chalkedon* (Sitzungsberichte der Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil-hist Klasse, Berlin, 1930)

34 Can 7, Beneshevich, p 86

35 Can 14, ibid, p 259

36 Can 3, 4, 5, ibid, pp 281-83 On this question see our article, "La legislation du concile de Sardique sur le droit d'appel dans la tradition canonique byzantine," *Messager de l'Exarchat* 80 (1972), pp 201-30

37 Beneshevich, pp 97-100 On the precise meaning of this expression we would subscribe to the opinion of K Müller, "Kanon 2 und 6 von Konstantinopel 381 und 382" *Festgabe für Adolf Jülicher* (Tübingen, 1927), pp 190-202

38 Cf n 10 above

39 Jerome, *Liber ad Pammachium* 37, PL 23 407A Innocent, Ep 24, PL 20 547-51

40 E Honigman, "Juvenal of Jerusalem," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950)

41 E Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum II 11 2*, pp 20-21 (112 13), and *II 13*, pp 4-7 (362-66)

42 Ibid, II 7, p 122

43 Beneshevich, p 97

44 G Dagron, *Naissance d'une capitale* (Paris, 1974), pp 410-53 See also M Salomon, *Rozwój idei Rzymu Konstantynopola od IV do pierwszej połowy VI wieku* (Katowice, 1975)

45 K Müller, *Kirchengeschichte* (second ed, Tübingen, 1929), 1, pp 656-58 See also Jones, 3, pp 299-300

46 E Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum II 13*, pp 88-89 (447-48)

47 Ibid, p 99 (458)

48 See J Hackett (Athens, 1923), pp 40-42

49 *Hist eccl*, passim

50 N H Baynes, "Alexandria and Constantinople A Study in Ecclesiastical Diplomacy," *Byzantine Studies and Other Essays* (London, 1955), pp 97-115

51 E Schwartz, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum II 11 1*, p 187

52 Nov 131, 2, ed Scholl and Kroll (Berlin, 1959), p 655

53 Beneshevich, p 168

54 See for example the treatise of Balsamon on the patriarchal privileges, Rhalles and Potles, 4, pp 542-55

55 See for example H Gelzer, p 569 Balsamon, commentary on can 2 of Constantinople, Rhalles and Potles 2, p 17 Nilos Doxapates, *Notitia Patriarchatum*, PG 132 1084-1113, in particular col 1097A M Blastaes, *Alphabetical Syntagma*, letter E, chap 11, Rhalles and Potles, 6, p 258

56 *Regestes du Patriarchat byzantin* number 2442, Miklosich and Muller, I (Vienna, 1860), pp 436-42

57 W Regel, *Analecta byzantino russica* (St Petersburg, 1891), pp 85-91

58 Beneshevich, p 97

59 Faustus of Byzantium, 5, 29, *Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum* 5 (Paris, 1938), pp 293-94

60 G Amadouni, "L'autocephalie du katholikat arménien," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 181 (Rome, 1968), pp 137-78, a volume devoted to the question of "I patriarcati orientali nel primo millennio

61 See D Angelov, *Blgarskata narodnost i deloto na Kliment Okhridski*, in the collection "Kliment Okhridski" (Sofia, 1966), pp 7-24

62 F Dvornik, *Les Slaves* (Paris, 1970), pp 111-14

63 J Snegarev, *Istoria na Okhridskata arhiepiscopuia* 1 (Sofia, 1924), pp 8-9

64 *Regestes*, no 1282

65 Cf no 56 above George Acropolites, *Annales* ¶ 33 (Bonn), p 55, speaks only of autonomy See also *Regestes* no 1285

66 Nicaea can 6 and 7, Constantinople can 2

67 Nov 131, 3, pp 655-56 The provision is taken up in the *Basilica* V, 3, 4, ed H J Scheltema and N Van der Wal (Groningen, 1955), vol I A Balsamon, commentary on can 2 of Constantinople, Rhalles and Potles, II, p 171

68 A Chodzko, *Legendes slaves du Moyen Age (1169 1237)* (Paris, 1858), p 57

69 D M Nicol, *The Despotate of Epiros* (Oxford, 1957), pp 59-60

70 *Digests*, L 17, 54, p 922

71 Letters 86 and 114, J B Pitra, *Analecta sacra* (Paris, Rome, 1891), 6, cols 381-90 and 487-98

72 *Ibid*, col 631-32 (reply to Constantine Kabasilas)

73 Balsamon, commentary abovementioned to can 2 of Constantinople See J Dadeshkeliani, "The Autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Georgia," *The Christian East* 3 2 (1950), pp 65-72

74 P Sokolov, *Russku arkhierei iz Vizantu* (Kiev, 1913), pp 55-158

75 F von Lilienfeld, "Russland und Byzance im 14 und 15 Jahrhundert," *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies* (London, 1967), pp 105-15

76 On the entire question of the Russian autocephaly, see E Golubinsky, *Istoria Russkoi Tserkvi* (second ed Moscow, 1900), pp 469-515 See also the presentation of the docent Muraviev, "Five-hundredth Anniversary of the Autocephaly of the Holy Russian Orthodox Church," *Acts of the Conference of the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches* 1 (Moscow, 1950), pp 42-82

77 • Rhalles and Potles, 2, pp 692-93

78 A V Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii Russkoi Tserkvi* 1 (Paris, 1959), pp 364-66

79 V N Beneshevich, *Sbornik pamiatnikov po istorii tserkovnogo prava* (Petrograd, 1915), p 34 n 1

80 I 3 See A A Bogolepov, "Conditions of Autocephaly," *St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 5 (1961), pp 16-17 analysis of this passage from the *Kormchaya Kniga*

81 Cf n 78 above See also F Dvornik, *Les Slaves*, p 602

82 See G P Fedotov, *Sviatye drevnei Rusi* (Paris, 1931), p 177

83 Golubinsky, p 511

84 See N V Sinitsyna, *Maksim Grek v Rossii* (Moscow, 1977), p 141

85 A V Kartashev, 2, pp 10-47

86. On the origins of this conflict see the very objective study of Patriarch Cyril of Bulgaria, *Ekzarkh Antim* (Sofia, 1956).
87. See the article “Φαρμακέδης, Θεόκλητος (1784-1860)” by N. Tzirakes, in *Θρησκ. καλ Ηθ. Εγκυκλ.*, 11 (Athens, 1967), col. 999-1004.
88. See S. Troitsky, “Ο tserkovoi autokefalii,” p. 39.
89. See the commentary of Aristenos on apostolic canon 1; Rhalles and Potles, 2, p. 3: “There absolutely must be three and not fewer to elect a bishop.”
90. See the commentary on this canon by Balsamon, Rhalles and Potles, 3, pp. 323-24. On the case cited see *Regestes* no. 1097.
91. *Digests*, 50.17, 29, p. 921.



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*ROBERT M. HADDAD*

## **REFLECTIONS ON THE ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE TOPICS OF THE GREAT AND HOLY SYNOD: A RESPONSE**

In part one of his provocative contribution, Father Stanley stresses in an altogether cogent manner the fact of the multiplicity of sources informing Orthodox Christian life. This serves as antithesis to that which Father Stanley perceives as the current trend in Orthodox theology: inappropriate emphasis upon a single source, the liturgical. None of us would quarrel with the assertion that Orthodox Christian life is determined not by one theological criterion but by a complex configuration of the many dimensions of the life of the Church – that which is usually subsumed by the term, *Tradition*. But in view of Father Stanley's impending assault against exaggerated emphasis upon the liturgical dimension, I miss his acknowledgment that the liturgy has been, for the great majority of the faithful, the principal vehicle for the transmission of *Tradition*, whether in its Scriptural or specifically doctrinal aspect. Similarly, and I believe that Father Stanley at least implicitly acknowledges this, the teaching role of the episcopacy, including the ethical component, is not entirely separable from its eucharistic role and, obviously, neither is easily separable from the liturgy. I would add one thought now and comment briefly upon it later: the teaching obligation of the contemporary episcopacy cannot be perfectly fulfilled without informed assimilation of “modern epistemology,” as Dr. James Counelis terms it, or “the various scientific and scholarly disciplines” of Father Stanley’s discourse.

Father Stanley goes on to note that, while emphasis upon the eucharist as a *major* uniting focus of the Church is well-placed, mere participation in the sacraments does not assure membership in the Church. There must of course be orthodoxy of faith. Also necessary – and here we are introduced to a theme which Father Stanley will develop in his discussion of diaspora and autocephaly - is communion of the liturgical community with its bishop who himself is in communion with all other bishops of the Church, primarily through the canonical structures of the patriarchal and autocephalous churches.

Father Stanley proceeds to stress that the moral tenor of the Orthodox participant is a formal and essential condition for church membership and, consequently, for participation in the eucharist. This assertion, however, is rightly modified by Father Stanley's and St. Basil's insistence that the eucharist serves also "as a contributor to . . . the growth of the ethical and spiritual life." Ending this, the first section of his paper, with renewed insistence that no single source is the exclusive interpretive key to all of Orthodox Christian reality, Father Stanley moves to a consideration of that which he calls "eucharistic exclusivity."

This comprises part two of Father Stanley's paper and is largely a severely critical discussion of the Valamo Statement of September 1977. For him, the Valamo Statement gives literary expression to the "the tendency in some quarters of Orthodox theology to subsume all theological reflection in the eucharistic experience and, more particularly, to imply that all theological resources, the sources of Orthodox Christian life, are exclusively eucharistic." I must state at this juncture that I cannot wholly share his assumption that eucharistic exclusivity dominates so thoroughly the general atmosphere of Orthodoxy today.

Father Stanley seems to see the genesis of eucharistic exclusivity in Orthodox participation in the World Council of Churches, in the sense that Orthodoxy was compelled to consider the ecclesiological issues engendered by the sheer fact of participation and so ushered forth eucharistic theology as a critical support. This, in turn, generated "a certain methodological momentum which seems to have assumed the stance of eucharistic exclusivity." For Father Stanley this process reaches a culmination of sorts in the Valamo Statement. But surely any analysis of Orthodoxy's stress upon eucharistic ecclesiology — whether exclusivist or partial—and the concomitant tendency toward *de facto de-emphasis* of the ethical dimension must take cognizance of other factors, notably the ancient and unrelenting emphasis upon the Church as an essentially sacramental reality. To be sure, this stress may have been exaggerated by Orthodoxy's opposition to papal claims to primacy of jurisdiction, by what Orthodoxy sees as the Protestant abandonment of the fullness of the sacramental life, by historical circumstances rooted in the Ottoman Orthodox as well as the Russian experience and in the neo-paganism that succeeded Islamic hegemony and Czarist theocracy. All of these

considerations conspired to make the liturgy perhaps the salient element in a beleaguered Church's strategy for survival. The Church sought what refuge it did in eucharistic ecclesiology because it was *and is* not only legitimate but central and focused — a still point in a largely hostile political and often religious environment. But to reach out once more to the world outside the Church, to recapture or recreate the emphasis on social ethics is, as Father Stanley is well aware, intimately related to eucharistic ecclesiology. For eucharistic ecclesiology is inseparable from the tasks of instruction and mission. And instruction and mission, in turn, are integral to the question of diaspora and autocephaly and, I venture to say, to the long-deferred Orthodox confrontation with, and selective assimilation of, modern epistemology — tasks whose urgency should not blind us to our current lack of preparation adequately to address them on an intellectually reputable level.

Returning to the Valamo Statement, however, we saw that it is subjected to sustained and specific criticism by Father Stanley. I have misgivings about some of this criticism. Father Stanley takes strong exception to the Valamo Statement's insistence that "the local community is a true and authentic manifestation of the Church of God only if it is catholic in its composition and structure." This because, as he points out, the local church generally cannot help but be ethnically, culturally, nationally or racially homogenous. What the Valamo Statement really means, he states, is that the local community must be open in its structure and not be restricted to any national or social group. True enough! But is this not precisely the reading most of us would give to the term 'catholic' in the original passage? However benighted, the authors of the Valamo Statement would never deny that the local church in, say, a Greek village is apt to be homogenous in virtually every sense. Nor would they have the temerity or naivete to suggest that this homogeneity distorts the catholic character of this scarcely atypical local church. There may lurk in Father Stanley's critique something of the proverbial straw man!

Father Stanley also sees perversion in the statement: "The local church . . . is not necessarily present in every eucharistic assembly but in the episcopal diocese through which each eucharistic gathering acquires its catholic nature." He detects herein the claim that the episcopal diocese gives the local church its catholic character, and this he views as a contradiction of the

previous statement that the eucharistic assembly cannot be true and authentic unless its own structure is empirically catholic. But wherein the contradiction? Are these not rather two attributes of the catholicity of the local church: openness to any Orthodox group or individual, and inclusion in an episcopal diocese for reasons to which Father Stanley himself alluded in the first section of his paper in a subheading entitled “The Role of the Episcopacy”? Because I cannot quite fathom the contradiction, I cannot see it as spawned by, in Father Stanley’s words, “the original and monolithic ecclesiology exclusively based alone on the Eucharist.” That the Valamo Statement goes on to discuss “faith, creed, councils and faithfulness to the tradition of the Church not as mere repetition but as a source of constant renewal of the Church,” and does so without reference to their eucharistic foundation may indeed indicate that Father Stanley’s insistence that an “exclusive and monolithic ecclesiology” informs the Valamo Statement is something of a misinterpretation. Less than precise phrasing is not always earnest of theological distortion. Is it possible to see the Valamo Statement as simply emphasizing the essential reality of the Church as a sacramental society, at the heart of which lies the eucharistic celebration? Father Stanley is of course correct in maintaining that the eucharist is not the source of every form of confession of faith but I have still to be persuaded that the Valamo Statement claims that it is.

Similarly, does the Valamo Statement’s insistence that “liturgical reality is rooted in the experience of the trinitarian life” suggest perhaps that its authors share Father Stanley’s awareness that “it does not follow that all other experiences of the life of the Trinity are of necessity liturgical or eucharistic”? So it would seem to me.

Again, Father Stanley may be correct in claiming that “the definitions of doctrine in the Councils do not in fact draw upon eucharistic theology in any significant way.” But surely the exploitation of the sources of these definitions – Scripture and patristic thought, reason and spiritual experience – took place in a theological climate that assumed the Church’s essential reality as a sacramental society, a reality which, then as now, cannot be equated with eucharistic exclusivity. This may help explain why “the eucharist is only infrequently mentioned” in the conciliar definitions.

I also confess to some difficulty with Father Stanley’s reasoning that “social ethics . . . cannot be based upon [eucharistic

ecclesiology] precisely because the focus of the eucharist is the Church and not the world as it is presently constituted.” But can we separate the Church from the faithful dwelling therein—dwelling at once within the sacramental society and within the world?

I find much more congenial Father Stanley’s insistence that the eucharistic basis must be supplemented by “the whole panoply of Orthodox teaching, experience, revelation.” I am not convinced, however, that the Valamo Statement stands in stark contradiction to this assertion. Nor am I able to share Father Stanley’s apparent conviction that the centrality of the eucharist “is improperly interpreted as exclusivity” as a matter of course in contemporary Orthodoxy. And while Father Stanley has cause for lamenting our relative disregard of social ethics, the reason for that contemporary disregard must be traced to other causes, some of which I attempted to sketch earlier. The same causes also helped generate a perhaps undue though hardly exclusivist emphasis upon eucharistic ecclesiology.

So we arrive at “Ethical Dimensions of the Topics of the Great and Holy Council,” part three of Father Stanley’s paper. Here the author rightly emphasizes the problem of the diaspora as the most important topic for the church in America. I share fully his conviction that the diaspora is unique in Orthodox Christian history, at least structurally or jurisdictionally. I support fully his call for a united American church which does not ignore “the real pastoral and cultural needs of the various jurisdictions” or the legitimate interests of the mother jurisdiction, while avoiding undue interference from abroad. I share Father Stanley’s hope that the Council will formulate a ‘procedure’ for the granting of autocephaly. Surely we may hope at least for the Council’s acknowledgment that an autocephalous American church is an imperative and not an ‘ideal’ to be deferred indefinitely. Perhaps three words drawn from an entirely different context — ‘all deliberate speed’ — are not without relevance here. Father Stanley’s concrete proposals concerning the phrasing of such a procedure seem to me worth heeding. So too his stress upon the ethical dimensions of the task, though I am unable to see these as utterly darkened by “eucharistic exclusivity.” (May I add parenthetically that those among us who invoke one set of historical circumstances to preclude the possibility, in any but the remotest future, of the appearance of a fully autocephalous American church should ask themselves whether a different set of historical circumstances militates against assigning to the Ecu-

menical Patriarchate jurisdiction over a loose confederation of the various American Orthodox bodies.)

Returning to Father Stanley's discussion, let me only remark that I find his call for an "Intra-Orthodox Ecumenical Movement" imaginative and timely.

I would focus upon but a single element in Father Stanley's discussion of the issue of marriage impediments and that is his call for reexamination of the issue in light of modern genetics. I use this as occasion to point out that Father Stanley is more than implicitly urging upon us confrontation and selective assimilation of modern epistemology. I would add that this is no less necessary to the broader task of the Church's mission in America. And can we not most effectively meet modern epistemology when liberated from the plethora of jurisdictions and the redundancies and the vast waste in mind, energy and resources that are its inevitable consequences? Will not our missions, and the episcopate's teaching role generally, achieve a new credibility when carried out under the aegis of an autocephalous American church firmly committed to its future in a specifically American cultural milieu — a church which sees its identity as one intimately associated with the English language? Have we not resisted long enough, the unqualified commitment to make of this rich and subtle vehicle another sacred language of instruction and mission?

In Father Stanley's discussion of topic ten of the Council's agenda, he sounds once more the theme — and we would do well to listen — that nothing inherent in our vision of the Church and the world requires a world-denying stance. Certainly we shall never be free of the tension — ancient, necessary and healthy — between withdrawal from and involvement in the world but Father Stanley reminds us that that tension must not be used as rationale to deny the world, and that merely one theological theme cannot provide the rational for our involvement *in* the world. I applaud, too, Father Stanley's admonition that the Council "cannot do its work without drawing upon the various scientific and scholarly disciplines" though it must draw its inspiration from an *inclusive* Orthodox theology. I would insist again that the ability of American Orthodoxy to draw upon these outside disciplines most effectively and efficiently depends, in large measure, upon the emergence of an autocephalous American Church. On such a church, too, depends our capacity to realize our task of mission in its fullness.

Father Stanley's outline of the core resources for an Orthodox

social ethic seems to me clear and to the point. We need his reminder that “social ethics . . . means that . . . the world is an object of transfiguring concern, not as an extraneous activity but as an essential outgrowth of being the Church.” And Father Stanley needs *no* reminder that the Church cannot reach out to the world in mission nor even adequately instruct the faithful without first understanding the world’s current self-definitions.

I shall close these extended remarks with a quotation from an unimpeachable source, selection of whom betrays, I pray, less my ethnic than my Orthodox bias.

Wherefore to search the Scriptures is a work most fair and most profitable for souls. . . . Wherefore let us knock at that very fair garden of the Scriptures, so fragrant and sweet and blooming. . . . But let us not knock carelessly but rather zealously and constantly . . . If we read once or twice and do not understand what we read, let us not grow weary, but let us persist, let us talk much, let us inquire . . . Let us draw of the fountain of the garden perennial and purest waters springing into life eternal. Here let us luxuriate, let us revel unsatiate for the Scriptures possess inexhaustible grace.

Thus far there is nothing remarkable except perhaps an imagery that sings even in English which, after all, is merely the language of Shakespeare. Our author goes on, and to this portion I wish to call particular attention.

But if we are able to pluck anything profitable from outside sources, there is nothing to forbid that. Let us become tried money-dealers, heaping up the true and pure gold and discarding the spurious. Let us keep the fairest sayings but let us throw to the dogs absurd gods and strange myths: for we might prevail most mightily against them through themselves.

The author, as most of you are aware, is St. John of Damascus. Is the Damascene urging us simply to reexamine the Greek philosophic legacy? I rather doubt it. St. John’s writings are rightly regarded as a summation of the patristic age, and the Greek legacy had already been largely assimilated by the Church. Is John calling us rather to examination of anything, from whatever source external to the Church, which, understood in light of the Christian revelation, promises to add to the treasury of the Church “the true and pure gold?” How timid we must appear when measured against Damascene’s charge.



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*STANLEY S. HARAKAS*

## **REFLECTIONS ON THE ETHICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE TOPICS OF THE GREAT AND HOLY SYNOD**

Orthodox Christian Ethics is a derived discipline perhaps more than most other disciplines. It has no autonomy or uniqueness of its own. It depends for its pronouncements, positions, and directions upon many sources, some more important than others, but all necessary. This is because the Orthodox Christian life and ethos about which it is primarily concerned is the outgrowth and expression of many other facets of the Christian revelation and the Christian experience.<sup>1</sup>

That so obvious a position needs to be reiterated as we seek to approach the topic of the Great and Holy Council is a commentary on the state of Orthodox theology today. However, it is necessary, and I seek to do that in the first section of this paper.

The reason for this need, in my judgment, arises from a tendency in today's theological climate in Orthodoxy which has approached what I call in the second section of this paper "eucharistic exclusivity." The purpose there is to describe and comment on the theological tendencies to eucharistic exclusivity and how these effect Orthodox Christian ethics. The third and final portion of the paper will deal in some detail with the ethical dimensions of the list of topics of the Great and Holy Council.

### **The Multiplicity of Sources for Orthodox Christian Life**

As we begin the attempt to deal with the place and perspectives of Orthodox Christian Ethics in the forthcoming Great and Holy Council there is need to emphasize the multiplicity of the sources of Orthodox Christian life. Every handbook of Orthodox Christian ethics makes short or long comment on this subject. It is not my intent just to fill pages with a repetition of this material. Rather, I wish to bring this position to the fore because I see it as a critical factor in the issues which are to be dealt with by the Great and Holy Council, especially the ethical concerns. More particularly, I wish to make a point about the current trend in Orthodox theology which gives too great and inappropriate emphasis on only one of these sources for the life of the Church, the liturgical.

I have noticed in much of Orthodox theology as of late that

there is an ever increasing tendency to reductionism, i.e. the practice of making one favored aspect of the whole Orthodox Christian truth the dominant and almost exclusive determinant of all other aspects of Orthodoxy. Our topic is not to be excepted. The Orthodox Christian life is not determined exclusively by any single theological criterion, but rather by a complex, interpenetrating configuration of many dimensions of the life of the Church. It is very important, that as we isolate them and study them, we do not succumb to the temptation to magnify any one of them into the 'key,' the single, exclusive, unique and absolute aspect of the Orthodox Christian life upon which everything else is totally dependent and totally derived. Of the many dimensions upon which Orthodoxy bases its vision and understanding of its life, I wish to raise up for brief scrutiny the Orthodox faith, the role of the Episcopacy, the sacraments, the common tradition, and the unity of the Christian life.

*Orthodoxy in Faith.* Orthodoxy of faith has always been of critical importance for the Church. Orthodoxy, i.e. correct belief has always been a major factor in the Church's definition of the lines of separation between those who were 'within' and those who were 'without,' as well as those on the way in and those on the way out. Thus, in the Scriptures, St. Paul's concern with the critical importance of Christ's resurrection for our salvation, and that it not be set aside or brought to nought, was in fact a call for Orthodoxy in faith on the part of the members of the Church. "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins."<sup>2</sup> The Orthodoxy of doctrine has its direct application to the Christian life: thus, the Apostle continues "if the dead are not raised, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'. . . come to your right mind and sin no more. For some have no knowledge of God . . ."<sup>3</sup> False teachers were a real and important concern for the early Church precisely because false teaching was seen both as divisive and destructive to the Christian life.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes heresy in doctrine could be distinguished from evil deeds,<sup>5</sup> while at other times a heretic was an evil person or rather not even to be considered human because of his heresy.<sup>6</sup> Patristic and conciliar history can be read as a struggle to define the faith and to condemn false teaching precisely because it was so important to the living of the Orthodox Christian life. In this context then, Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, and more specifically the doctrinal teachings of the Church form the chief foundation stones for the ethical teach-

ing and life of the Church.

*The Role of the Episcopacy.* The episcopacy has a multi-faceted place in the life of the Church. The bishop is not only the president of the eucharist in the local church; he is the guarantor of the faith as one who is in direct line with the apostolic tradition. In the words of the sixth century Patriarch of Jerusalem, Sophronios, “An Apostolic and ancient tradition has prevailed in the holy churches throughout the world, so that those who are inducted into the hierarchy sincerely refer everything they think and believe to those who have held the hierarchy before them.”<sup>7</sup> Part of that continuity with the ancient tradition of the Church expresses itself in the teaching task and in the responsibility of protecting the moral life of the flock entrusted to the bishop. Oversight over the ethos of Christians is an essential aspect of the bishop’s role in the Church.<sup>8</sup> Thus the fifty-eighth canon of the Holy Apostles calls for the instructing of the clergy and people by the bishop. As interpreted, this canon teaches that “it is the bishop’s indispensable duty to teach the laity subject to him the dogmas of piety every day, and to adjust it to a correct belief and to a virtuous manner of life.”<sup>9</sup> The bishop, of course, fulfills his teaching responsibilities in communion with the whole Church, i.e., in concord with the other bishops, both those who have maintained the tradition in history, as well as those who are leaders of the local churches contemporaneously with him. The holy canons are guarantors and evidence of the seriousness with which the Church views the ethical dimensions of the Church’s responsibility for the life of the faithful. A recent effort at the codification of the canons of the Orthodox Church devoted a 400 page volume to the topics usually discussed in ethics text-books, including such themes as: drunkenness, gambling, violence, blasphemy, swearing, false-witnessing, fortune telling, murder, suicide, abortion, exposure of infants, adultery, bigamy, fornication, sexual perversions, pederasty, bestiality, foul-language, greed, theft, grave-robbing, temple-robbery, profiteering, usury, insults, concern for the disabled, the poor and the suffering, slander, worship and prayer, the duties of clergy and monks, magic, astrology, Sunday rest, disrespect for the clergy, avoidance of Holy Communion, rejection of Holy Communion, war, mutilation, divorce and remarriage, abandonment of the spouse, abandonment of parents by children, pimping, prostitution, homosexuality, lesbianism, masturbation, abduction, male and female clothing, petting, family decency and respect, and the

acceptance of gifts by the Church from fornicators and from prostitutes, among other topics. The teaching Church is a resource of ethical instruction.<sup>10</sup>

*The Sacramental Life.* Without question, the sacramental life is in direct relation to the episcopal role. Not only is the bishop the chief teacher of the local church, he is also the head of the eucharistic synaxis which is, in the words of John Zizioulas, “the whole church itself, the whole body of Christ.”<sup>11</sup> It has now become quite commonplace in Orthodox circles to see the eucharist as a major uniting focus of the Church. Coupled with the initiatory sacrament, baptism, this focus is well-placed. When St. John Chrysostom sought to articulate the meaning behind the narrative of Christ’s passion which included the description of the piercing of Christ’s side and the outrush of blood and water, he saw an important parallel. The saintly Father says:

An indescribable mystery takes place; water and blood come forth, for because it was from these two that the Church was constituted. Those who are initiated are equally reborn by water, and fed by blood and flesh.<sup>12</sup>

Baptism as initiation into the life of the Church and eucharist as *the* event which manifests the unity in and with the Church are firm Orthodox ecclesial realities. Yet even here, there is no unitary and absolute rubric. Mere participation or conduct of the sacraments does not assure membership in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. At least three other factors must be present for the eucharist, especially, to manifest the unity of the Church. The first is Orthodoxy of faith. A community could well conduct the eucharist in the most Orthodox of manners; yet, if it could be shown that the leaders of this community and the members consciously taught a teaching contradictory to Orthodox doctrine and faith, they would be separated from the body of the Church.<sup>13</sup> The conduct of the eucharist would not save them from the charge of heresy and expulsion from the faith-community. One is reminded of the anathemas of the Sunday of Orthodoxy service. Nearly all of the false-teachers referred to in that impressive service were “Orthodox” in the beginning. As they persisted in their heresy, their conduct of the eucharist began to reflect their heresy. Yet for years their conduct of the eucharist did not vary significantly from the normal practices of the Church, but this did not prevent them from being condemned and being separated

from the Church by synodal decrees.

The second factor which must be present for the eucharist and the sacramental life in general to manifest in truth the unity of the Church is the communion of the liturgical community with the bishop, who is in communion with all of the other bishops of the Church. Let us assume that a congregation made it its practice to conduct the Divine Liturgy in an Orthodox fashion, that its leaders preached and taught in an Orthodox fashion. Would these two factors then in fact make that community a part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ as understood in Orthodox ecclesiological teaching? It would not appear so. Critically missing is both communion with a canonical and Orthodox bishop for that area, and the bishop's communion with all other Orthodox bishops, primarily through the canonical structures of the patriarchal and autocephalous churches.

*The Orthodox Christian Ethos.* A third factor determining whether or not one is in communion with the Church in the eucharist is the moral life style of the participant. Though, historically, the Donatist controversy clarified the issue regarding the personal worthiness of the priest as far as the "validity" of the sacrament was concerned, the Church's canon law also excluded the unworthy, i.e. immoral, priest from the exercise of his priestly function, including in the first instance, the conduct of the eucharist. Such action known as "suspension" may be of short or long duration and may even be permanent. This is a punishment which prohibits the exercise of priestly function, but does not exclude from participation in the eucharist, therefore does not exclude from the Church.<sup>14</sup> However, for both clergy and laity, moral turpitude can be the cause of their separation from the body of the Church as a whole. The Greek words *anathema* and *aphorismos* are identical in meaning according to Hamilcar Alivizatos<sup>15</sup> and may be translated as "casting out, banishment."<sup>16</sup> It is the heaviest of ecclesiastical penalties for by it "one is cut off from ecclesiastical communion" and becomes as "one who no longer belongs to its membership." Alivizatos notes that the punishment of *anathema* or *aphorismos* is imposed on those who deny the Christian faith (apostates) and upon those who have committed serious ethical violations, thus showing their condition of separation from the portion of Christ."<sup>17</sup> And that is the point. Orthodoxy of faith and a certain measure of morality make up a formal and essential precondition for church member-

ship and consequently participation in the eucharist. Those who, in spite of this eat and drink unworthily, profane the Lord's body and blood and eat and drink condemnation upon themselves.<sup>18</sup>

However, the other direction between life style and eucharist also needs to be affirmed. The eucharist is not only the manifestation of the unity of the Church which is conditioned by faith, communion with the bishop and life-style, it also is perceived as a contributor to that faith and the growth of the ethical and spiritual life. Suffice it here to quote from the prayer before communion attributed to St. Basil:

Let your precious Gifts to health restore me,  
to cleanse, enlighten and protect me,  
to sanctify body and soul and save me.  
All phantasies and evil doings to avert,  
the devil's urges in the mind conceived  
and by the body effected.

Let your precious Gifts to inner freedom lead me  
to love for you, to the security of life amended,  
to your commands' fulfillment;  
to the communion of the Holy Spirit,  
to assets valuable for life eternal,  
to making my defense before your awesome Tribune  
acceptable to you;  
not, my Lord, I implore,  
to a charge or condemnation.  
Amen.<sup>19</sup>

Thus the ethical life of Christians and the teaching appropriate to it are to be seen as essential dimensions of the life of the Church, and sources for that life. The ethical life of Christians understood as "putting off the old man with his deeds" and the ethical implications of growth in the divine image, in fact, are highly emphasized in some biblical passages so as to create an impression of almost exclusive focus on the ethical life as a determinant of membership in the Kingdom. Thus, the 13th Chapter of 1st Corinthians gives to agape-love a central place to the Christian life. Truth, prophesy, knowledge, faith, charity, martyrdom, spiritual experience (tongues) and Christian hope are all valued in that chapter, but also subsumed to agape-love. Should he have chosen to, I am convinced that Paul could have just as

easily included in that subsumed status worship and the sacraments, including the eucharist. This emphasis on love is no less important in the Johannine tradition, as well, so it is not to be seen as a peculiar Pauline emphasis. Even more supportive of this position is the description of the Last Judgment in Matthew (25: 31-46). The only criterion offered for either condemnation or entrance into the Kingdom is Christian philanthropy. Disturbingly, neither faith, nor sacraments, nor episcopal loyalty, nor eucharistic life is mentioned, only the presence or absence of a philanthropic life-style in the believer. This has had a continuing impact on the living tradition and teaching of the Church. Thus, from the earliest of times almsgiving and philanthropy were means of obtaining forgiveness, and growing in the image of the Philanthropos Lord.<sup>20</sup>

Further, the Matthean account of the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7) and the Lukan account of the so-called Sermon on the Plain (6:12-49) both refer primarily to life-style, ethos, ethical behavior, but make no mention of Orthodoxy of faith and doctrine, ecclesial loyalty (“why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do what I tell you,” Jesus is quoted as saying in Luke 6: 46), nor of sacramental life.

*The multiplicity of Sources for the Orthodox Life* I believe, in closing this section, that my point has been made, even though I have just barely touched upon the multitude of sources which provide input for the Orthodox Christian life. No single source, no matter how important and significant, is adequate to cover, explicate and serve as the unitary and exclusive source of the Orthodox way of life, the Orthodox *vioma*.

The Orthodox approach to the life of the Church thus seems to resist another form of reductionism – that philosophical tendency which requires that a single concept and idea serve as an exclusive interpretive key to all of Orthodox Christian reality. If the Orthodox were to espouse such a philosophical approach, it is obvious that only one reality could serve that integrative function, that is, the Triune God. However, at the same time, the Orthodox truth about the Triune God is cast in fully apophatic terms, i.e. the discontinuity between the creator and the created creature effectively prohibits any comprehensive, analogous, and rationally derived system-building from the teachings about the Holy Trinity.<sup>21</sup>

Eastern Orthodoxy, rather, may be likened to a jewel which displays its wholeness through the multiplicity of its facets. Each

facet is distinct and discrete. As the light of truth shines through it, it is also colored, filtered and refracted by the light transmitted through all of the other facets of the jewel. As we approach the jewel, there is no question that we as individual persons are not able to comprehend its total beauty, radiance, and elegance. As we seek to study it, comprehend it and to appropriate it, we tend to limit our vision of it, to isolate aspects of the whole so that somehow we might make some of it our own. That is our lot as finite creatures. Otherwise we are overwhelmed. Theology, of necessity, is subject to the same procedure. Each of the theologians' disciplines seeks to comprehend the facet entrusted to it for study. Just as bishops tend to see the Church as an essentially episcopal institution,<sup>22</sup> and parish presbyters as a uniquely parochial phenomenon, and monastics tend to see the bishops and the parishes as poor adjuncts and reflections of the 'genuine Orthodoxy' of the ascetical and monastic life, and just as laity tend to see the Church as it relates to their personal life with a strong emphasis on the family, so in like manner theologians tend to interpret the whole of the theological endeavor from their own disciplines.

There is an inevitability about this tendency. It is not simply our individual penchant to magnify in importance the disciplines which we serve; this is to be expected as an almost inevitable outcome of our specialization in one or another field of theology. The problem arises when we begin to think and argue and do theology as if *our* discipline and *our* insights are *the* key, *the* exclusive, central indispensable fundamental principle by which all other realities of the life of the Church are to be interpreted and to which they are to be subjected. The fact is, for reasons noted above, such vertical dependency on any one discipline or ecclesial reality cannot but cause distortion of the whole. I believe that this is what has occurred with the recent emphasis on the 'centrality of the eucharist.' Briefly, I wish to address this issue before proceeding to the other concerns of this paper.

#### **Contemporary Eucharistic Exclusivity and the Ethical Concerns of the Great and Holy Council**

I do not believe it is necessary to be overly specific in this section with extensive documenting and personal reference. I am not interested in specific nuances, but in the general atmosphere of Orthodoxy today. I believe that my point will be understood

and that the general theological climate I am addressing will be generally acknowledged by my readers.

What needs to be emphasized under this heading is the tendency in some of Orthodox theology today to subsume all theological reflection to the eucharistic experience and more particularly to imply that of all theological resources, the sources of Orthodox Christian life are exclusively eucharistic.

We can point with gratitude and appreciation to the works of those Orthodox scholars who have given to us a new vision of the importance of the eucharist to the life of the Church — restoring to all of Orthodoxy important and very fruitful understandings of the eucharistic reality for the life of the Church. Nothing I say here is intended to minimize that important contribution. In some cases the motivating force for this work has been the recognition that the eschatological implications of the eucharistic experience had to be reemphasized.<sup>23</sup> This very valuable contribution has indebted us all. The restoration of the Orthodox perception of the eucharist from an exclusively mysteriological mentality, bridging the sacred and the profane, to a more clearly eschatological experience, through which the Church of God is constituted and manifested, continues to be a highly significant and productive contribution.

This re-orientation came at a most opportune moment, which provided a second impetus for emphasis on the eucharist. The demand created to think through ecclesiocial issues arising out of the Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement found in eucharistic theology an important and critical support. A number of very significant studies throughout the Orthodox world addressed the ecclesiological questions of the meaning of the unity of the Church and the meaning of so-called “intercommunion” on the basis of eucharistic theology and the ecclesiology which arose from it.<sup>24</sup>

All of this has been a most valuable contribution. However, this approach seems to have developed a certain methodological momentum which seems to have assumed a stance of eucharistic exclusivity. A case in point is the ‘Valamo Statement’ which was produced by a consultation of Orthodox theologians sponsored by the Orthodox Task Force of the World Council of Churches and held at New Valamo, Finland, in September of 1977.

The document addresses three topics: the local church, the proclamation and articulation of our faith, and the Church’s responsibility in the world today. In general, the section on the

local church articulates the basic lines of the eucharistic ecclesiology generally affirmed in Orthodoxy today.<sup>25</sup> Yet, it pushes this so hard and so exclusively so as to make unwarranted claims for it. Thus, in the very definition of the issue it narrows ecclesiology as a whole to an *exclusive* eucharistic approach. “We felt it necessary,” the statement notes in its fourth paragraph, “to examine the ecclesiological basis of our ecumenical commitment, namely our eucharistic understanding of the Church.”<sup>26</sup> Now we can historically dispute that statement. The involvement in the ecumenical endeavor did not in fact arise from the “eucharistic understanding of the Church,” rather it was an expression of the Church for cooperation in matters of philanthropy and social concern, decidedly divorced from both doctrine *and* ecclesiology. This often forgotten fact is not so important as is the observation that in this and other theological statements eucharistic theology is given an inordinate centrality.

Another statement in the next paragraph needs to be assessed in the same light. “The whole life of the Church, the word and the sacraments, stem from and find their fulfillment in the Holy Eucharist.” That certainly must be a historically dubious statement. Can we seriously maintain that the Word of God, the revelation in Scripture and Holy Tradition, stems from the eucharist? I know that there is an inter-relation, obviously. But there is no doubt that this cannot be anything more than an unrealistic hyperbole. Dubious as well is the assertion that the whole life of the Church finds its fulfillment in the eucharist. The *unity* of the Church is *manifested* in the eucharist, without a doubt. But its fulfillment in an escatological sense will take place at the real, objective and historical Second Coming of Christ, the General Judgment and the establishment in fullness of the Kingdom of God at the end of the Age. Even before that, furthermore, the whole life of the Church cannot – except by the most tortuous and improbable rationale and the ignoring of the message of Scripture and Tradition – be confined to the eucharist. I hope to explicate the details of this statement as we proceed in the treatment of the Valamo document.

Another excessive statement based on a correct eucharist ecclesiology in the Valamo statement is the following: “The local community is a true and authentic manifestation of the Church of God *only* if it is catholic in its composition and structure.” It is an over-statement, which if true would exclude a large

part of the Orthodox world from being a true and authentic manifestation of the Church of God. What it means to say is that the local community must be open in its structure and not restricted to any natural or social groups or entities. Again, we have an over-statement, which is pushed to unreal extremes. The Church is catholic and universal because its message is destined for all persons of all social and natural conditions.

The statement then turns to the place of the episcopacy. I would only note here a serious problem for Orthodox eucharistic ecclesiology. Most of the treatments of this approach treat the matter in terms of the local parish synaxis and all of the rationale is developed on that basis for the identification of the Church with the eucharist; thus, reference to the Pauline *epi to auto*. Suddenly, however, there is a transformation. The reality of the bishop as head of the 'local church' and his essential place in it causes a redefinition. The 'local church' now is the episcopal diocese. That this creates a new emphasis – one might say, a new teaching – is passed over: "The local church, therefore, is not necessarily present in every eucharistic assembly but in the episcopal diocese through which eucharistic gathering acquires its catholic nature." Previously it was held that the eucharistic assembly could not be true and authentic unless its *own* structure and *own* position was empirically catholic. Now, we are told that in fact it is the episcopal diocese which gives the local synaxis its catholic nature. There are serious problems in this issue. I do not mean either to caricature them or to minimize them. But does not part of the problem arise because of the original exclusive and monolithic ecclesiology based alone upon the eucharist?

A healthy treatment follows in the Valamo statement on faith, creed, councils, and faithfulness to the Tradition of the Church not as mere repetition but as a source of constant renewal of the Church. What is notably absent from the treatment of these topics is their eucharistic foundation and source, which one would require if the exclusive and comprehensive eucharistic theology of the first part of the document was followed. It is obvious that it simply is not possible to document that the content of the faith, the content of the creeds, the conciliar decisions of the Church all derive from the eucharist. Certainly the creeds developed within the liturgy but primarily in relation to baptism. This observation is not to deny the relationship of faith with the eucharist. It is to point out that an exclusivistic eucharistic

theology simply cannot sustain itself. It is true, as the Valamo statement says “every form of confession of faith is shown to be in the end a matter of participation in the local eucharistic community,” but that does not make the eucharist the source of “every” form of confession of faith.

I skip over the section on the eucharist and ecumenism and direct myself to the treatment of the “Churches’ Responsibility in the World Today.” I am particularly interested in pressing this point because it relates directly to the approach of the Orthodox Church to questions of ethics, and particularly to the tenth topic of the Great and Holy Council which deals with issues of social concern. The confusion in this section of the document is tremendous: “liturgical reality is rooted in the experience of the trinitarian life”; the members “living, practicing and witnessing this eucharistic experience create a new life style.” If liturgical reality is rooted in the experience of the Trinity is a true statement, it does not follow that all other experiences of the life of the Trinity, are of necessity liturgical or eucharistic.

Further the statement holds that “in each culture the eucharistic dynamics leads (*sic*) into a ‘liturgy after the liturgy,’ i.e., a liturgical use of the material world. . . .” There are serious problems with this attempt to subsume Orthodox Christian ethics, and social ethics in particular, to an exclusively sacramental model and source. First, the ‘transformation’ theme is not the primary focus of the eucharist, as expounded by this eucharistic theology. The dynamic is manifestation, showing, revealing of the Church. Its focus is not even on the change and transformation of the personal and individual lives of the faithful in attendance; much less is its focus on the transformation of the empirical sinful structures of the ‘world,’ i.e., that which is not the expression of the Kingdom of God. It is one of many sources for addressing the transformation of the life of the faithful and the sinful social structures, but it cannot be the one, exclusive source either for personal Christian ethics, nor for an Orthodox social ethics. It may provide an image, a Christian vision, but it simply is not adequate to serve as the primary source of Orthodox Christian Ethics. This is true because the focus of the eucharist is on the community of the believers, on their *koinonia* among themselves and with the Triune God. This is born out in the empirical history of the Church. Eucharistic worship is essential, but where the foci of the church’s activities change from the community of

the believers to other equally important and essential concerns for the Church and its members, the eucharist is not prominent. The definitions of doctrine in the Councils do not in fact draw upon eucharistic theology in any significant way. Scripture and patristic thought, reason and spiritual experience are at the forefront. So, too, in the struggle of the individual Christian to grow ethically and spiritually in the image and likeness of God toward theosis. It is remarkable, in this context especially, how absent the eucharist is from the *Philokalia*; at the forefront is personal prayer, the practices of *askesis*, obedience, self-denial and the *agona* of the individual ascetic's life. In the same vein, in a review of the passages of Holy Scripture which refer to the moral life, the eucharist is only infrequently mentioned or appealed to, and in one case, paradoxically, the eucharist becomes the occasion of immoral behavior.<sup>27</sup> Further, when the eucharist is related to the ethical moral life it is done in a way which is least favored by the primary emphasis of this eucharist theology, for it emphasizes precisely the mystical personal union, and the power of grace to lift up, strengthen and effect good and wipe out the evil in the believer. Notably absent from the treatments of these eucharistic theologies is the tradition of the *metavole* and the real presence of Jesus' Body and Blood. Yet traditionally this has been one of the chief connections between the eucharist and the moral life.

More particularly, social ethics can receive some input from eucharistic ecclesiology, but it cannot be based upon it precisely because the focus of the eucharist is the Church, and not the world as it is presently constituted with its sinful structures, its power patterns, its wars, its racial inequalities, its economic injustice, its terrorisms, its technologies, its dilemmas of medical practice, its civil anomalies, its natural disharmonies and so on. If the Church is to address these issues in any effective and respectable way, it will do so only on the basis of the whole panoply of Orthodox teaching, experience, revelation. The eucharistic basis is simply too restricted for the task.

The ultimate expression of the confusion in the Valamo statement is in this sentence: "The dynamics of the concept of 'liturgy after the Liturgy' is to be found in the several programs and activities of the WCC. . . ."! What is one to say? All this time and energy have been spent to emphasize the uniqueness of Orthodox eucharistic doctrine: to hold that true outreach to the world comes only from the eucharistic ecclesial reality of the Church.

However, the fruits of this reality are now identified as pouring forth from a body which is not the Church, and which does not share in the canonical eucharistic life of the Church as understood by the Orthodox. What is glaring by its absence is a statement which should logically follow such a presentation. What it should have said was that the dynamics of the “liturgy after the Liturgy” are to be found in the deep involvement of the Orthodox Church in the suffering of mankind, in the struggle for world peace, in its contributions to the eradication of all forms of injustice, and so on. We know why *that* statement could not be made! But after expounding such a theology, to admit that we tag along giving our ‘support’ to those ‘outside’ the eucharistic communion of which we speak, is – at the very least – contradictory.

Scholarship has shown that the Church of the fourth through twelfth centuries was active in many spheres of philanthropy and social welfare (a period, by the way, when all of the misinterpretations of eucharistic life were supposed to have taken place, in the opinion of some liturgical researchers). This scholarship has shown that it was not primarily the eucharist or an ecclesiology based on the eucharist which was at its heart: the doctrines of creation, incarnation, divine condescension and philanthropy, mission and above all the doctrinally based ethical teaching of agape-love were at its core.

Again, I wish to emphasize my point. The importance, the significance and the reality of the eucharist needs to be held in its rightful place for the life and teaching of the Church. But its centrality for the Church is improperly interpreted as exclusivity. If the image of Orthodoxy as a multifaceted jewel is correct, then each of its facets is not only essential but each refracts the light of the others, and each then captures again and re-reflects its own light which has passed through the others.<sup>28</sup> Such an understanding protects us from reductionisms which cannot but harm and distort what St. Maximos the Confessor has described as the “beautiful heritage of the faith.”<sup>29</sup> The conclusion is this. For Orthodox Christian ethics, the whole of Orthodox Christian experience is its source.

#### **Ethical Dimensions of the Topics of the Great and Holy Council**

*The First Nine Topics.* There are ethical dimensions to all of the

topics of the Great and Holy Council, not only topic ten. In this section some of the other nine topics will be briefly addressed. It might be noted first that the history of the choice of the topics was one by which the Church slowly came to a realization that its main purpose was to deal with some practical, human and empirical needs of the Church. The Council is definitely not being conceived of as an Ecumenical Council which will deal with major theoretical theological issues. As I have noted elsewhere:

The ambitious agenda of the 1st Pan-Orthodox Council of Rhodes, formulated in 1961, had been pared down substantially by November 1976. This took place on the basis of the general consensus of the Orthodox Churches that doctrinal issues were not to be discussed and that the purpose of the Great and Holy Council was to deal with issues of practical concern.<sup>30</sup>

In dealing with the first nine topics we wish to address not the substantive issues, but to focus only on some of the ethical dimensions of those topics.

The first, and certainly most important topic for the Church in America is the topic of the diaspora. Without question this is one of the most thorny problems to be faced by the Council. On the one hand, there is a long doctrinal and canonical tradition which seeks to address the problems related to the diaspora. At the same time, there is a uniqueness to the problems which is characteristic of the particular times and places in which we live. This goes beyond the special character of every nation and people. The situation in the diaspora is qualitatively new and different. The Orthodox Church has never faced such a situation in such magnitude before. Drawing on the whole panoply of Orthodox doctrine, canon law, ecclesiology and the tradition of respect and appreciation for the various national cultures, the Holy and Great Synod will have to devise a fresh and imaginative response to the questions raised by the diaspora situation. Consequently,

a new, Orthodox, Christian, realistic, workable and practical solution must be formulated. . . . Orthodoxy in America, for instance, must be a united and not a fragmented Church. At the same time, the real pastoral and cultural needs of the various jurisdictions may not be ignored. Further, the interests and relationships of the ancient mother jurisdictions must, somehow be respected, while the right of the local hierarchs,

clergy and people to deal with their own problems and issues, without undue interference from abroad needs to be embodied in a new ecclesial system.<sup>31</sup>

In the preceding paragraph a number of words with ethical connotations are mentioned in relation to all the interested parties. Words such as 'united,' 'pastoral needs,' 'cultural needs,' 'interests,' 'relations,' 'respected,' 'right,' 'undue interference' all point to the need for ethical sensitivity in addressing the problem of the diaspora.

Regardless, however, of the concrete solution which is hammered out and presented to the diaspora as its future course by the Great and Holy Council, it is necessary to point out certain factors relative to the implementation of the plan.

On the one hand, the 'new ecclesial system' proposed to meet the needs of the problem of the diaspora will have to be formulated in a spirit of sensitivity, justice and equity. No group or jurisdiction should be treated as a pawn, or be considered expendable. Christian ethics will require even-handed fair treatment. This should be a high priority consideration in the venture to work out a solution. The Orthodox principle of the corporateness of the Church sees the Church fully present in each of its 'parts' in which the Holy Spirit resides fully. This theological position requires a corresponding attitude in relation to all jurisdictions of the Church. The structures and patterns of the solution to the diaspora which will be ultimately adopted by the Great and Holy Council ought to acknowledge this reality. "If we live in the Spirit," St. Paul said, "let us also walk in the Spirit."<sup>32</sup> As much as possible the dynamics of power politics, ecclesial maneuvering and domination need to be minimized. Our patterns of solution ought not to be inspired by the diplomatic activities of the world. Jesus' instruction is still pertinent. "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."<sup>33</sup>

Further, the greatest demand on our moral capacities will come as we begin to implement the system. Bishops and priests will have to extend themselves in love, patience, and humility as they deal with parishioners, parish leaders and fellow clergy,

especially those of other national and cultural backgrounds. No matter what system is adopted, it is clear that the critical factor in its success will be the spirit of tolerance, patience, and love which all Orthodox of all jurisdictions must display in the implementation. Old habits of ethnic denigration, parish isolationism, and even ridicule must be overcome. New patterns of mutual ethnic understanding and appreciation, parish cooperation, and general respect must be introduced and fostered.

This will require a special effort on the part of all, especially the hierarchs and the clergy, both among themselves and in instructing the faithful.

The autocephaly and autonomy issues are at once technical concerns which call for a general policy by which future decisions about the granting of autocephaly and autonomy will be made, as well as a human and concrete problem which requires much Christian sensitivity. In the first instance, the ethical dimensions are relational. The Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Mother Church and the Church under consideration all have claims, rights, and expectations. There is need to have a forum where those claims, rights and expectations can be heard, balanced, and adjudicated. It is this spirit of fairness and concern over the relations of all parties which motivated my proposal published elsewhere on this topic. There I write:

The great and Holy Council will ultimately have to adopt a procedure for the granting of autocephaly which will respect all of these factors. It might look something like this: The Ecumenical Patriarchate will convene a special synod on autocephaly, on the basis of a proposal or proposals from the interested parties. Membership in the synod would be held by all of the patriarchates and the existing autocephalous churches. The views of all would be solicited with special reference to the mother church or mother churches directly involved, as well as the local Church under consideration. Once consensus was achieved, the synod would act and the Ecumenical Patriarchate would proclaim the new church autocephalous, in the name of world Orthodoxy.<sup>34</sup>

The ethical dimensions of this proposal are its spirit of mutual cooperation, the genuine attention to the concerns of all parties and the necessity for the exercise of genuine Christian agape-love in its fulfillment.

Under the heading of the diptychs, I would like to raise the ethical dimension of formal vs. substantive relations. The diptychs are one of several formal means by which the patriarchates and the autocephalous churches liturgically recognize the other churches as canonical members of the Orthodox Church. It is significant that it takes place in a liturgical setting and in the context of intercessory prayer. It surely is a sign of the true Orthodox spirit, when the unity of the Church is manifested in an outpouring of mutually offered prayers by all of the leaders of all of the patriarchates and autocephalous churches for each other.

That prayerful mutual recognition is certainly a paradigm for the rest of our mutual relations. We cannot in truth pray for each other if we do not really know each other. So often, in parish life the people are never taught to know, and appreciate the history of other jurisdictions. Some church leaders and theology professors may travel extensively to other Orthodox Churches, and thus become familiar with them, and learn to appreciate their unique contribution to the whole of Orthodox Christian life, but by-and-large our local churches are isolated from each other. It seems that every Orthodox Church would do well to make it a policy to regularly and systematically foster understanding and appreciation for the other Orthodox Churches *as they are*, in their concrete, historical reality. There is a serious danger to an ecclesiology which focuses too narrowly on one's own local church. But the proper response is not an amorphous, disembodied, idealistic concept of the Church which is free of all cultural, historical and concrete aspects of empirical ecclesial life. The doctrine of the incarnation precludes such an approach which is more platonic than Christian. What we ought to do is to start an 'Intra-Orthodox Ecumenical Movement' using the methods of the WCC, regional, national, and local council of churches. We should be heartened that the leaders of the various churches seem to appreciate this need as witnessed by the large numbers of visitations and delegations on the highest levels. There is need to democratize and expand this process so that it affects every Orthodox Christian in every Orthodox parish.

The issue of marriage impediments has numerous ethical implications. Marriage impediments are addressed primarily by Orthodox canon law. There are three chief areas of concern under this rubric, prohibited relationships, marriage of ordained clergy and

mixed marriages, particularly the issue of the marriage of the Orthodox with persons of other religions and with non-believers (atheists).

From an ethical point of view, all three present serious problems for analysis. I would, here, like to briefly focus on the first, the question of prohibited marriages on the basis of blood relationship. This issue is one which comes out of the developing field of bio-ethics. It is generally recognized that the prohibition of certain marriages arose from a simple understanding that inbreeding tends to increase the percentage of abnormal births. Modern genetic scientific discoveries have certified this rather simple procedure of negative eugenics. The Church, however, needs to ask if in the contemporary situation its practice is of significant value. The strict provisions of the canons spoke to a relatively stable social order; the close relationships of village life tended to form the social and biological context of these canons. The mobile, urban populations of our day, however, no longer provide such a danger. However, we are now facing a serious biological phenomenon of the so-called 'pollution of the genetic pool.' That is, more and more people — as a result of advanced medicine — are surviving from previously fatal diseases, so as to marry, reproduce, and transmit genetically based diseases. Much study is required, of course, but certainly a Church-based moral teaching on marriage between persons with a high likelihood for the transmission of genetically based diseases, would not be inappropriate, nor strange to the ethical and canonical tradition of the Church.<sup>35</sup>

*Topic Ten.* The official title of this final topic on the agenda of the forthcoming Great and Holy Council is: "The Contribution of the local Orthodox Churches to the adoption of the Christian ideals of peace, freedom, brotherhood and love among the peoples of the world, and the elimination of racial prejudice." It is, of course, not possible to treat all of these problems in any exhaustive fashion. Nor is there much to be gained in stating the obvious, i.e., the fundamental Orthodox Christian support for world peace, freedom, brotherhood and the elimination of racial prejudice. Some ethically oriented observations, however, are not out of place here.

*The Orthodox Christian Search for a Social Ethic.* Our history is full of incomplete and unresolved, often unconscious, attempts to address the issue of the relationship of the Church and the

world. Scholarship has indicated that we do not discover, on the one hand, a stable, unvarying and universally accepted pattern of response and theological rationale. On the other hand, however, neither do we find an abandonment of the world, a sort of total unconcern for it from the point of Christian consciousness and self-understanding.<sup>36</sup> Further, the studies which have taken place tend to support the view that various resources in the Tradition tend to produce a tension between withdrawal from the world and involvement in the world. In order to articulate this tension within Christianity, numerous typologies and schemata have been devised to identify the theological and socio-logical forces at work. For instance, Fr. Georges Florovsky has developed this idea in terms of tension relationships and conflicts in three interesting essays entitled "Antinomies of Christian History: Empire and Desert," "Christianity and Civilization," and "The Social Problem in the Eastern Orthodox Church."<sup>37</sup>

There is often an attempt on the part of scholars to present Orthodoxy in terms of passivity, other-worldliness, and disinterestedness for the concerns of this world. This view I believe has been effectively challenged. There is nothing inherent in the Eastern Christian vision of the Church and the world which requires or demands such a world-denying stance. In an article entitled, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church" John Zizioulas has set up the problem well. In speaking on the topic of the Church in the world and in history, he writes:

The Spirit brings the eschaton into history in an event of communion. If this is the meaning of Pentecost in Acts, it means that the Church is caught in a dual existence. On the one hand in her being eschatological in nature she is deeply, existentially contrasted to this world; the world hates her, as it hated Christ (Jn 15:18; 17:14) and she must live "the doors being shut" (Jn 20:19), her "citizenship" being "in heaven" (Phil. 3:20). On the other hand, by virtue of the same Pneumatological dimension, the Church is by nature relational, her existence cannot be but *ek-static*; she cannot reject anyone or anything; she can only embrace even that by which she is rejected. This dualism is perhaps the most acute problem implied in the Pneumatological dimension of the Church. How is it to be resolved?<sup>38</sup>

It is first necessary to note that in the study just quoted,

Zizioulas is drawing primarily on the Orthodox doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The other observation which needs to be made is that other scholars have come to the same conclusion, but coming from other theological themes and emphases. And the question remains the same: How is the tension to be resolved?

*Theological Inclusivity.* The answer is to be found by rejecting the search for one key, one all-embracing theological theme which will provide the solution to the rationale for Christian involvement in the world. That rejection opens up the resources of the whole of the Orthodox experience. An Orthodox Christian social ethic can only be built upon the totality of the resources available to us in Holy Tradition.

It also means that as Orthodox Christians we will reject the desire to resolve the tensions which exist in the Christian life regarding the personal, spiritual, and moral life, the corporate existence of the people of God, and the outreach of the Church in mission and social concern. These dimensions of the Christian life are simply not reducible to one another and need to exist side by side in an interpenetrating, mutually supportive relationship.

The outreach dimension of this three-focused tension of the Christian life, which is addressed by topic ten of the agenda of the Great and Holy Council, draws upon the whole range of Orthodox reality and experience in order to do its work. It, of necessity, functions on the basis of some theological affirmations more heavily than upon others, yet there is hardly a doctrine, sacrament, liturgical experience, ascetic discipline, canonical corpus, or ethical principle which will not have something to contribute to an Orthodox social ethic.

Thus, the Orthodox social ethic called for in the development of topic ten of the Great and Holy Council will be essentially ecclesial in character. It cannot do its work without drawing upon the various scientific and scholarly disciplines. But it of necessity draws its inspiration and basic direction from an inclusive theology. This broad based theological foundation will focus of necessity on certain resources of the faith and life of the Orthodox Church which are more appropriate to its work. Yet it will, if it is truly Orthodox, constantly keep before it the demands of the personal and individual life with its own demands for *askesis* and growth and the essential eucharistic, sacramental, and ethical requirements of the people of God among themselves.<sup>39</sup>

I am deeply appreciative in this context of Fr. John Meyendorff's statement with which I concur and which I feel well-expresses the basic point of this paragraph.

It is certainly dangerous to identify any particular theology with the language of the Church, for the Church speaks many languages. However, each of them is the language of the Church only in as much as it is consistent with the other true expressions of the Christian Faith. There is variety in tradition, but there are neither vertical nor horizontal breaks. There is *always* some break, however, between Truth itself and *each* of its verbal or philosophical expressions.<sup>40</sup>

*The Core Resources for An Orthodox Christian Social Ethic.* Though it is true that Orthodox Christian ethics has no autonomy of its own, and that it is dependent upon the totality of Orthodox Christian truth and life for its resources, several sources stand out as more useful and necessary. This is particularly true for an Orthodox social ethic. We can, here, only mention some of these resources, leaving for another time their fuller development for the Orthodox Christian social ethic.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity in its particular Orthodox expression is very important for Christian Ethics. The Good is not only identified by the Fathers of the Church with the Triune God, but that very fact points to the truth that the Good is personal and relational. Further, the Orthodox view on the filioque indicates that there are at least two kinds of relationships important to ethics: the formal, structured, patterned relationship derived from Orthodox insistence upon the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father alone, and a relationship based on the love of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father which is more personal and, one might say, 'emotional.' The first is the basis for rules in ethics, the second for the Christian insistence on proper motivation based on agape-love.

The doctrine of Creation precludes any form of dualism between sacred and secular in an ultimate sense. The patristic teaching is always inclusive of the created world, and inclusive of all mankind, of all history, of all society, and of all life's processes. For the Fathers, redemption consists of a restoration of creation. Consequently, the Church cannot remove human beings from God's creation. Ethically, that means that the Church's task is to contribute to the transfiguration of the

cosmos, Creation and society where it is distorted, and to preserve and enhance it where it is wholesome.<sup>41</sup>

Orthodox Christian anthropology is itself based on the doctrines of the Holy Trinity and creation. The dynamic of growth and development implied in the doctrine of creation in the image and likeness of God is important not only for Orthodox Christian personal ethics, but also for social ethics, for its evaluation of social structures and institutions will be determined in large part about what kind of influence they exercise on the personal life of persons growing and developing toward theosis and in community with other persons and with God.

The Incarnation of the Son of God is crucial to Orthodox Christian social ethics because it unites the divine and the human into one reality, thus becoming the prototype for the destiny and *telos* of individual persons, the body of Christ, and for the social whole. The Incarnation provides the Christological foundation for the Kingdom.

Ecclesiology in one sense, is the articulation of the present experience of the kingdom. In its sacramental and eucharistic form, ecclesiology serves the Orthodox Christian ethic as a paradigm for the world. The Church, especially as it manifests itself in the eucharist, provides a vision of the world as it should be, in unity with God, in brotherly communion, and with the transfiguration of fallen nature and social institutions from within by Grace. For social ethics, this means that what is not the Church, i.e. the world, is an object of genuine ethical concern, not as an extraneous activity, but as an essential outgrowth of being the Church. When cast in these terms the emphasis is on the decision and will of the Church, its hierarchy, clergy and laity to consciously reach out to the world, to address its problems and to contribute what it is able to contribute, communing with the Kingdom, and to ameliorate its condition as much as is possible in so much as it is still “the world,” and not the Church.

Agape-love is the chief motivating factor for the involvement of the Church in the issues of the world. Agape-love is commanded, and therefore not an automatic outgrowth of faith or liturgy or spiritual life. It is the result of decision and the free exercise of human self-determination (*autexousion*). It expresses itself in philanthropy which is concern for human suffering, pain, and need. Philanthropy is personal, intimate and concerns itself with immediate human needs. Social concern, motivated by the agape-love, addresses the institutions, systems and structures of the

'world' and seeks to limit their evil effects and enhance their positive contribution to human well-being.

Finally, eschatology puts social ethics in perspective, by providing the sober realization of the constant incompleteness of all things in this world and of our inability to realize fully the full transfiguration of the 'world' by our human efforts. That is why Orthodox social ethics, unlike its eucharistic experience, can never be triumphalistic or overly optimistic. It is God who will bring about His Kingdom, not we. In the interim, our efforts in philanthropy and social concern must take place, motivated by agape-love, but always tentative, imperfect, unresolved and incomplete. The Church will always be aware that the *agona* and the struggle with evil forces and intransigent and perverted power structures will mean compromise and the acceptance of the possible rather than the ideal in each situation. Only the eschatological expectation of the Kingdom as a gift of God makes that tolerable to the Christian conscience.

*The Implementation of an Orthodox Social Ethic.* The core resources cited above need to be implemented on two levels. The first is in terms of the articulation of Orthodox Christian positions on the various topics and the second in terms of concrete outreach and involvement.

On the first, it should be pointed out that the issues listed in topic ten of the agenda of the Great and Holy Council are important and significant, but far from exhaustive. The Great and Holy Council must speak a word of direction and guidance on peace, freedom, brotherhood and race relations so as to avoid two pitfalls. If the statements are written as vague generalities, they will have little effect or meaning, even for Orthodox Christians. On the other hand, given the variety of societies in which the Orthodox Church now lives and functions, a too specific articulation will narrow its usefulness and also runs the danger of making the Great and Holy Council serve as a propaganda mouth piece for one or another socio-economic, political system.<sup>42</sup>

Rather, in ethics there is a level of ethical decision-making and ethical pronouncement known as the 'middle axiom.' It avoids mere idealistic statements on the one hand and specific policy proposals on the other.<sup>43</sup> In order to do this, of course, we need to develop in the area of Orthodox Christian ethics some particular fields, such as, with specific reference to the items in topic ten: Orthodox peace studies, Church-State relations, and race studies.

However, as long as we remain on the 'pronouncement level' we will not do much to contribute as local churches to the transformation of the social problems and issues of the 'world.' Without adequate study we will merely react to those issues, but without a means for local action and involvement we will never influence these issues. Admittedly, the topic correctly focuses on the contribution of the *local churches* to questions of social concern. No one envisages an international Orthodox social action agency. The social, political, economic, ethnic and cultural environment will in large part dictate both the possibilities and the agenda. But wherever possible, local churches (however that ambiguous term might be understood) should organize to accomplish things, and not just to make pronouncements about them.

*A final comment about topic ten.* The inclusion of these items in the agenda of the Great and Holy Council ought not to be perceived as a fortuitous or ingratiating after-thought. The gradual reduction of topics to those issues which are of direct and immediate practical concern for the inner life of the Church properly sets these issues of social concern as a vital problem for the inner life of Orthodoxy today.

Too long we have been forced by circumstances to stifle the philanthropic and social concerns of the Orthodox Christian Faith, and to deny our own history of social involvement in the moral problems of the world. The inclusion of topic ten in the agenda is a call of the Orthodox Church to restore practice and life, a demand of its faith which has been allowed to remain dormant too long. Topic ten is a practical concern of the Orthodox Church for its own life as well as for the life of the world.

## NOTES

1. I myself do this at some length in my own forthcoming work as well as in a paper soon to be published in a book in preparation by the Triennial Ecumenical Study Commission of the Episcopal Church in the United States, edited by Robert Wright.

2. 1 Cor. 15.17. All quotations from the New Testament are from RSV, except where noted.

3. 1 Cor. 15.32b, 34.

4. 2 Cor. 11.13, 2 Pet. 2.1, Eph. 4.14, 1 Tim. 1.3.

5. Thus Chrysostom distinguishes those who are lost διά πονηρῶν δογμάτων from those who are lost διά βίου πονηρίαν. Hom. 47.2 on Matthew.

6. *Apostolic Constitutions* 2, 21, 2.

7. *Synodical Epistle* PG 87:31, 9-52.

8. 1 Tim. as a whole. Particularly Chapter 4.
9. Interpretation of Canon 58 of the Apostolic Canons in *The Rudder* (Pedalion) . . .  
Tr. D. Cummings (Chicago, 1957), p. 100.
10. Evangelos K. Mantzouneas, *Κανονικός Ποιωικός-Ἐπιπιμιακός Κώδιξ* (Athens, 1973).
11. John Zizioulas, 'Η Ἐνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῇ Θείᾳ Εὐχαριστίᾳ καὶ τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ κατά τοὺς Τρεῖς Πρώτους Αἰώνας (Athens, 1965), p. 190.
12. *Commentary on John*, Homily 85, 3.
13. 2 Cor. 11.4, Gal. 1.7,9.
14. Panagiotis Panagiotakos, *Σύστημα τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ Δικαίου κατά τὴν ἐν Ἑλλάδι ἐσχίνην αὐτοῦ*, Γ' Τό ποιωικόν Δίκαιων τῆς Ἐκκλησίας (Athens, 1962), p. 295ff.
15. See his study "Ἀνάθεμα," in *Θρησκευτική καὶ Ἡθική Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια*, 2, 469-73.
16. G.W.H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1968); see entries titled "Ἀνάθεμα," "Ἀφορισμός."
17. Alivizatos, "Ἀνάθεμα," pp. 469, 472.
18. 1 Cor. 11.27-32.
19. Translation by Nicon D. Patrinacos, *The Orthodox Liturgy* (Garwood, N.J., 1974). Fr. Nicon retains the mood and meter of the original quite successfully in this translation.
20. Cecil J. Cadoux, *The Early Church and the World* (Edinburgh, 1955), pp. 64, 130, 198, 285, 451, 604. See also Demetrios J. Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1968).
21. See my article "The Local Church: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective," *The Ecumenical Review* 29 (1977), 141-53.
22. See John A. Erickson, "Concrete Structural Organization of the Local Church," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, Vol. 20, Nos. 1 & 2, where he discusses this phenomenon as "The Highest Authority Ecclesiology."
23. For example: Alexander Schmemann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Portland, Me., 1966); *For the Life of the World* (New York, 1963).
24. For example: Chrestos Sp. Boulgaris, 'Η Ἐνότης τῆς Ἀποστολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας (Thessalonike, 1974). John Rinne, 'Ἐνότης καὶ Ὄμοιωμορφία ἐν τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ κατά τό Πνεῦμα τῶν Οἰκουμενικῶν Συνδῶν' (Thessalonike: Theological Annual of the Theological School of the University of Thessalonike, 1971); Georges Florovsky, *Τό Σῶμα τοῦ Ζῶντος Χριστοῦ: Μία Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐρμηνείᾳ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, Tr. L.K. Papadopoulos (Thessalonike: Patriarchal Institute of Patristic Studies, 1972); Dimitru Stanilaoae, *Γάλ· Ἐνα· Ὁρθόδοξο Οἰκουμενισμό: Εὐχαριστία - Πίστη - Ἐκκλησία (τό πρόβλημα τῆς Intercommunion)*, Tr. Eleftherios Mainas (Piraeus, 1976); and most important of all John D. Zizioulas, 'Η Ἐνότης τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐν τῇ Θείᾳ Εὐχαριστίᾳ καὶ τῷ Ἐπισκόπῳ Κατά τοὺς Τρεῖς Πρώτους Αἰώνας (Athens, 1965).
25. Harakas, "The Local Church."
26. These quotations are taken from the original mimeographed "Report: The Ecumenical Nature of the Orthodox Witness."
27. 1 Cor. 11.17-22.
28. For a more sociologically oriented approach to the generally presented here, see my articles "The Church and the Secular World," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 17 (1972), 167-99; "Ἐννοια τῆς Προσαρμογῆς τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας εἰς τὸν Σύγχρονον Κόσμον," reprint from *Ἐπιστημονική Ἐπιτηρίς τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης*, Volume 19, special issue, 1974.
29. *Epistles* 12. PG 91:465.
30. Stanley S. Harakas, *Something is Stirring in World Orthodoxy: An Introduction to the Forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church* (Minneapolis, 1978), p. 15.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

32 Gal 5 25

33 Mt 20 25-28

34 Harakas, *Something is Stirring*, p 27

35 This is a complex field with many theoretical doctrinal and ethical implications. Two useful treatments are Stanley Joel Reiser, Arthur J Dyck, and William J Curran, eds., *Ethics on Medicine Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Concerns* (Cambridge, 1977), sec 62, 63, 64, 65. Also James B Nelson, *Human Medicine Ethical Perspectives and Contemporary Issues* (Minneapolis, 1973), Ch 5

36 Cecil J Cadoux, *The Early Church and the World* (Edinburg, 1975) Demetrios J Constantelos, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare* (New Brunswick, 1968) Idem, Ή Πιστις τῆς Ἀρχαῖας Ἐκκλησίας ὡς Κανών τῆς Ζωῆς καὶ ὁ Κόσμος (Athens, 1959) Georges Florovsky, *Christianity and Culture* (Belmont, MA, 1974) Ignat Giordani, *The Social Message of the Early Church Fathers* (Boston, 1977) H Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York, 1951) R A Norris, Jr, *God and World in Early Christian Theology* (New York, 1965) Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (New York, 1931), Vols 1 & 2

37 Chapters 3, 5, and 6 in his *Christianity and Culture*

38 J D Zizioulas, "The Pneumatological Dimension of the Church," *International Catholic Review*, March/April, 1973

39 Harakas, "The Church and the Secular World," pp 184-94

40 "Debate on Palamism, Philosophy, Theology, Palamism, and Secular Christianity," *St Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 10 (1966), 207

41 Rosemary Redford Ruether, *The Radical Kingdom The Western Experience of Messianic Hope* (New York, 1970), p 161

42 Harakas, *Something is Stirring*, p 65

43 Harakas, "Greek Orthodox Ethics and Western Ethics," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 10 (1973), 750-51



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## REVIEWS

*St. Arsenios of Paros. Modern Orthodox Saints 6.* By Constantine Cavarnos. Belmont, Massachusetts: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1978. Pp. ix, 123. Frontispiece. \$6.50; Paper, \$3.95.

The indefatigable Dr. Constantine Cavarnos, President of the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, continues steadily to publish a very attractive series of books on modern Orthodox Christian saints. Thus far five volumes have appeared on (1) St. Cosmas Aitolos; (2) St. Macarios of Corinth; (3) St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite; (4) St. Nikephoros of Chios; and now (6) St. Arsenios of Paros. In preparation are volumes dedicated to St. Seraphim of Sarov (5) and St. Nectarios of Aegina. Certainly Cavarnos and the Institute are rendering students and adherents of Orthodox Christianity a distinct service by making available in English material that which is not otherwise readily accessible to the reader and even the specialist.

In volume six Cavarnos follows the pattern that he has already established for previous volumes. He provides a preface with substantial introduction to the saint, reproduces in translation the life of the saint from his Greek biographer (in this case by the Abbot of the Monastery of Longovarda in Paros for more than half a century, Philotheos Zervakos), provides in English translation accounts of fourteen miracles of St. Arsenios, given by Father Zervakos and some spiritual counsels of the saint, plus notes, bibliography and an index.

Cavarnos offers us the first book in any language other than Greek to be published on St. Arsenios (1800-1877), a younger contemporary of St. Nikephoros of Chios and St. Seraphim of Sarov. The author sees St. Arsenios as an unusual confessor, spiritual guide, educator, ascetic, miracle-worker, and healer who spent his last thirty-seven years on the island of Paros and it is his life, character, and thought that Cavarnos seeks to reveal to a wider public. The book should also be helpful in offering a better understanding of the Kollyvades Movement and its influence far beyond Mount Athos, its place of origin, and of his Elder, Father Daniel of Zagora, who also belonged to it. In 1967 the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople recognized Arsenios of Paros as a saint of the Orthodox Church.

In preparing this volume, Cavarnos has made extensive use of *The Life, Conduct and Miracles of Our Father Arsenios the New, Who Led a Life of Spiritual Endeavor in the Island of Paros* by Archimandrite Philotheos Zervakos, the most comprehensive study of the saint available. In addition, he has culled necessary information from a variety of primary and secondary sources listed in his bibliography.

One of his own admonitions could probably be used to summarize St. Arsenios's own life, work, and counsel to all Christians:

“Be at peace with others, have humility, remember Christ and imitate His humility, obedience, and love for all — without which you cannot be saved, without which the other virtues are of no avail” (p. 105).

John E. Rexine  
*Colgate University*



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## *EVA CATAFYGIOTU TOPPING*

### **ST. ROMANOS THE MELODOS: PRINCE OF BYZANTINE POETS**

*Τίς ἀσίγητον στόμα κτησάμενος  
εὐφημήσει τὸν Θεῖον Ρωμανόν;*

*Who will with unceasing voice  
praise the divine Romanos?*

Byzantium and modern scholars have unanimously acclaimed St. Romanos the Melodos the Prince of Byzantine Poets. He has also been called the Pindar and Dante of Byzantine literature, and the greatest poet who ever wrote hymns for use in the Christian Church. Romanos' poetic genius received recognition during his lifetime. Within a few decades after his death, the sacred poet was canonized by the Orthodox Church whose liturgy had been enriched by his poetry. Romanos was venerated not only in Byzantium but also by the church in Armenia. In Russia after the ninth century he was honored as "The Singer of Sweetness." Later church poets composed hymns to Romanos, the inspired "orator of God."

A saint of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Romanos the poet and composer is annually commemorated on the first day of October. In ikons the poet-saint wears a halo of gold. Pictured as a young deacon, he is clad in the shining white robes of his priestly office. In his right hand he holds a scroll on which are inscribed his best known lines, the opening verses of the Nativity Kontakion:

*Ἡ Παρθένος σήμερον τὸν ὑπερούσιων τίκτει,  
καὶ ἡ γῆ τὸ σπῆλαιον τῷ ἀπροσίτῳ προσάγει.*

1. Pr. 1-2

*Today the Virgin gives birth to him who is beyond substance;  
and the earth brings a cave to him who is unapproachable.*

A brief *synaxarion*, an account of the saint's life, was composed for use on his feast day. This modern version derives from a longer and older *vita* which no longer exists.

Our holy Father Romanos, now among the saints, was born in Syria, Emesa on the Orontes being his native city. At Berytus he served as deacon in the Church of the Resurrection. He left this city during the reign of Anastasios I and came to Constantinople. There

he served with perfect piety and dignity in the Church of the All-holy Theotokos in the Kyrou quarter. Romanos often kept night-long vigils in the Church of the Theotokos at Blachernae. In the mornings he returned to the church in Kyrou, where once he received the divine gift of writing and setting to music kontakia for the whole year.

Our Lady Theotokos appeared to him in a dream. And handing Romanos a scroll, she commanded him to eat it. The holy man obediently opened his mouth and swallowed the paper. Upon awakening, he climbed into the pulpit and began to sing the Nativity hymn, it being the holy feast of Christmas.

Having composed hymns for the other holy days and hymns in honor of the saints, he wrote all together more than a thousand kontakia. After a life of piety and holiness he went home to the Lord. His poems written in his hand were preserved for a long time in the church where he was also buried.

Few facts are thus known about the poet's life. Since Romanos' birthplace was a cosmopolitan center inhabited by a mixed population, the poet's ethnic origin is uncertain. One late tradition makes him a Jew and a convert. It is more likely, however, that he belonged to a Christian family of Semitic provenance.

Romanos probably received his education in his native city where an indigenous Syriac culture co-existed with Hellenism, imported into the Near East many centuries before the poet's birth. Two rich ancient cultural traditions therefore nourished his genius. There he studied Greek in schools which still continued to use the classical rhetorical curriculum. Romanos had a thorough knowledge of Greek and the Greek sense of form. Although he vehemently condemned pagan learning in his kontakion for Pentecost, he had nevertheless profited from the rhetorical tradition inherited by Christendom from Athens.

A young man of talent, education and ambition, Romanos left Emesa to begin his diaconate in the provincial capital. It was as a deacon-poet serving in the cathedral of Berytus that Romanos composed his first kontakia, poetic sermons set to music and chanted after the Gospel reading in the Liturgy. Several of the extant kontakia belong to this period of apprenticeship in Berytus. In one of these occurs a rare autobiographical reference:

*Εἰς ὅρος ἀναβαίνοντα σὲ τὸν πρεσβύτην  
οὐ νέος ἐγώ  
ζηλῶσαι θέλω καὶ ναρκοῦσι μον πόδες.*

*A young man, I want to imitate you the old man  
climbing the mountain and my feet are numb.*

Romanos is the young man whose faith is weaker than that of Abraham the old man.

Sometime in the first decades of the sixth century, before 518, Romanos left the province of his birth for the imperial capital. In Constantine's city, splendid with palaces and churches, Romanos fulfilled his *diakonia* as the supreme sacred poet of Byzantium. Until his death soon after 555, Romanos lived in a monastery attached to an old and famous church dedicated to the Theotokos.

A century earlier, Kyros, a high government official who was also a noted poet, had built the church to house an ikon of the Theotokos which had mysteriously appeared in a cypress tree. Soon known as the Kyriotissa, this ikon proved to be a worker of miracles. To it is attributed the miracle of Romanos' poetry. For the Byzantines believed that only a miracle, an act of heaven, could account for the beauty of Romanos' kontakia, particularly his light-drenched Nativity poem, Byzantium's favorite hymn for Christmas.

Although a version of the *synaxarion* states that Romanos wore the purple of the imperial court, it is unlikely that he ever exchanged the quiet of his suburban monastery for the glitter of a courtier's life at the palace. Inspired by his sacred muse, the Theotokos, Romanos composed his kontakia in her church in Kyrou. In the quickening presence of the holy mother of God his genius prospered. The *synaxarion* mentions "more than a thousand" kontakia. This exaggeration is a metaphor for the poet's generous gift to the hymnography of the Byzantine Church.

From the *kontakaria* of medieval Byzantium have been rescued the texts of fifty-nine genuine hymns by Romanos. Thirty-four of these deal with the person of Christ, from his birth to the Second Coming. Five cantica are based on other episodes from the New Testament, and seven on characters from the Old Testament. Three are dedicated to martyrs and saints, and ten deal with various subjects, fasting, repentance, baptism, earthquakes and life in a monastery. To read these is to read the hopes, fears and faith not only of a poet but of a whole civilization.

Romanos lived in a century propitious to his genius. The sixth century in Byzantium is one of history's golden ages of creativity. It was presided over by the Emperor Justinian, who stamped an era with his own imperial energy and daring grandeur. Professing

himself a “musician and architect, a poet and philosopher, a lawyer and theologian,” this ruler, who reputedly never slept, governed for almost five decades (518-565) a vast empire stretching from Gibraltar in the West to the Euphrates in the East. Justinian’s *basileia* boasted of sixty-four provinces and nine hundred thirty-four cities.

Romanos lived and wrote in the capital of this powerful monarch. He was, in fact, Justinian’s admiring contemporary. Justinian’s generals reconquered long-lost provinces. His lawyers codified Roman law, and his architects built out of marble, gold and silver a monument to Divine Wisdom, the unrivaled temple in which God Himself delighted to dwell. At the same time a deacon-poet in a suburban church was composing his own sublime monument to the triumphant spirit of the Eastern Empire and Church in the sixth century. Romanos the Melodos sang new songs worthy of the new Hagia Sophia.

A complex, strictly structured poetic form, the kontakion achieved perfection in the verses of the Syrian poet from Emesa. Each kontakion begins with a brief prelude called the *kukulion*. Whether in the shape of a narration or an address to God, the prelude usually introduced the kontakion’s theme. The three verses of the *kukulion* of the Palm Sunday kontakion demonstrates how effectively Romanos established mood and theme in a few lines:

Τῷ θρόνῳ ἐν οὐρανῷ, τῷ πώλῳ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς  
 ἐποχούμενος, Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός,  
 καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων τὴν αἰνεσσαν καὶ τῶν  
 παιδῶν ἀνύμνησιν  
 προσεδέχου βοώντων σοι·  
 “Εὐλογημένος εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος τὸν Ἀδάμ  
 ἀνακαλέσασθαι.”

16. Pr.

*Seated on a throne in heaven, on a donkey on earth,  
 Christ O God,  
 you received both the praise of angels and the  
 hymn of children  
 who shout to you,  
 “Blessed are you who comes to recall Adam.”*

The last verse of the prelude constitutes the refrain to be repeated at the conclusion of each subsequent stanza. Although Romanos’ kontakia disappeared from the liturgy at the end of the seventh century, some of his preludes are still sung in the Orthodox Church.

The length of Romanos' kontakia varies from eleven to forty strophes, twenty-four being the preferred number. The strophes of a kontakion are metrically identical and different from the prelude. The impressive variety and perfection of Romanos' meters, the subtle rhythms and the flowing currents of his verses testify to his extraordinary craftsmanship, originality, and mastery of Greek. Less talented hymnographers borrowed Romanos' meters.

The initial letters of the strophes formed the acrostic in which the poet identifies himself or gives the title of the poem. One acrostic of twenty-four letters formed the sentence Τοῦ ταπεινοῦ Ρωμανοῦ ὁ ὅμνος (*The hymn of the humble Romanos*). The prince of Byzantine poets habitually described himself *tapeinos*. Another acrostic names poet and feast – Εἰς Βαΐα Ρωμανοῦ (*By Romanos for Palm Sunday*).

Romanos' kontakia usually concluded with a formal prayer, very often a liturgical prayer spoken by the poet in his priestly role. The poet petitioned God in behalf of the church. In language and formulas familiar from the Divine Liturgy Romanos prayed:

τὴν σὴν εἰρήνην σῶ λαῶ ὡς οἰκτίρμων παράσχου,  
ἐλέησον οὓς ἔπλασας,  
εἰρήνην δώρησαι ταῖς σαῖς ἐκκλησίαις,  
φυλάττων βασιλεῖς πιστούς,  
σῶσον σου τὸν κόσμον.

*Being merciful, grant your peace to your people;  
have mercy on those whom you created;  
give peace to your churches;  
safeguarding your pious rulers;  
save your world.*

The most eloquent liturgical prayer in the kontakia is not spoken, however, by Romanos in his own person. Rather, he assigned it to the Theotokos, who prays to her own son, "the young child, God before all ages." The first Nativity Kontakion concludes with her beautiful prayer of nineteen verses:

ὑπὲρ ἀέρων παρακαλῶ σε  
καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν καρπῶν τῆς γῆς καὶ τῶν  
οἰκούντων ἐν αὐτῇ.

*I pray to you for winds  
and for fruits of the earth  
and for those who dwell in it.*

Σῶσον κόσμον, σωτήρ· τούτου γάρ Χάρω ἤλυθας·

στῆσον πάντα τὰ σά· τούτου γὰρ Χάρω ἔλαμψας  
ἔμοὶ καὶ τοῖς μάγοις καὶ πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει.

1. κβ' 7-8, κδ' 1-3

*Save the world, O Savior; for an account of this you came.  
Cause to stand aright all your possessions; for on account of  
this you shone upon me and the Magi and the entire creation.*

Occasionally the concluding prayer is personal rather than liturgical. Shifting from the congregational *ἡμεῖς* to the individual *ἐγώ*, Romanos prayed for the welfare of his spirit and for his art. At the end of his joyful paschal hymn, the sacred poet prayed for his soul's resurrection through song:

Συνναστήτω σοι, σωτήρ, ἡ νεκρωθεῖσα ψυχὴ μου·  
μη φθείρῃ ταύτην λύπη καὶ λοιπὸν εἰς ληθῆν ἔλθῃ  
τῶν ἀσμάτων τούτον τῶν ταύτην ἀγαξόντων.

*Let my deadened soul, O Savior, rise again with you.  
Let not sorrow destroy her, and let her not come to forget  
these songs which sanctify her.*

δὸς μοι Χάρω κηρύττοντι τοὺς ὅμινους σου, ὅτι δύνασαι  
ὁ τοῖς πεσοῦσι παρέχων ἀνάστασιν.

29. κδ' 1-3, 11-12

*Give me grace as I proclaim your hymns, because you have power,  
you who offers resurrection to the fallen.*

In another similar personal prayer Romanos petitioned God for the beauty of his poems:

δείξον με καλλιεργον βοῶν.

16. ις' 8

*Show me a singing work of beauty.*

Such prayers offer insights into the sacred poet's attitude toward his distinctive *leitourgia*, the writing of hymns. The Byzantine hymnographer was a true artist, conscious of form. His hymns consequently aimed at beauty as well as truth. Romanos' interest in artistic form is manifested in the symmetry and intricacy of his kontakia, in which meter, diction, imagery, theme, and mood are articulated with the precision of a mosaicist. His well-wrought kontakia are the work of a superb poet, a true creator.

Within the spacious perimeter of his kontakion, Romanos accommodated many diverse elements, hymnic and homiletic. Since the kontakion functioned as sermon in the Liturgy, the poet was obliged to preach God's word, to instruct the faithful. A stern

priest, speaking with authority of the church, Romanos addressed his congregation, the φιλόχριστοι or ἀδελφοί. The kontakia often began and sometimes ended with fervent exhortations by Romanos. At the conclusion of the kontakion *On Judas* the deacon-poet urged the congregation to profit from the example of the betrayer:

ταῦτα οὖν, ἀδελφοί, γωώσκοντες  
 καὶ τὴν τοῦ πράτου πτώσω βλέποντες  
 τοὺς ἑαυτῶν πόδας στηρίξωμεν.  
 οτήσωμεν οὖν τὰς βάσεις ἐπὶ τὰς ἀναβάσεις  
 τῶν ἐντολῶν τοῦ κτίσουν.

17. κγ' 4-6

*Therefore, brothers, knowing these things  
 and seeing the fall of the seller,  
 let us make fast our feet.  
 Therefore let us fix our steps upon the stairs  
 of the Creator's demand.*

Theological discourses and diatribes against heretics, Jews and pagans, all the κακόδοξοι outside the church, sometimes interrupt the progress of a kontakion. Relevant to the poet's *didaskalia*, they were more interesting to Romanos' congregation than to the modern reader.

Pure poetry appears in Romanos' lyrics, in the lyrical conception of an entire hymn, such as those for Palm Sunday, the Ascension and the Second Coming, and in smaller lyrics, his *asmata kaina*. Quoting twice the Psalmist's injunction "To sing a new song unto the Lord," Romanos exercised his poetic talents in the composition of such songs. Paradox, apophatic vocabulary, hallowed imagery, antithesis and superlatives characterize these small hymns within the kontakia. Composed in the sublime style, they often express mystic ecstasy. The song of Symeon after he received the God-child in his arms burns with fiery images and emotions:

ἡ σφραγὶς τῆς Θεότητος ἡ ἀπαράλλακτος,  
 τὸ τῆς δόξης ἀπώγασμα  
 τὸ καταλάμπον τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς  
 ἐν ἀληθείᾳ,  
 ὁ ὑπάρχων πρὸ αἰώνων καὶ τὰ σύμπαντα  
 ποιήσας.  
 φῶς γάρ τηλαυγές εἰ, φῶς τοῦ πατρὸς σου  
 ἀσύγχητον, ἀδριστον.

4. ζ' 4-7

*The indistinguishable seal of divinity,*

*the radiance of glory  
 which shines upon the souls of men  
 in truth,  
 you who exist before the ages and created the universe,  
 you are the far-shining light, the unconfused,  
 infinite light of your Father.*

The tone of the *asma kainon*, however, varies according to character and dramatic situation. The two magnificats composed by Romanos for the Theotokos are marked by awe and gentleness as Mary praises God, her newborn infant. When the disciples come down from the Mount of Olives, they sing a stately hymn to the holy mountain of Christ's ascension. Adam, released from death, sings an epikionion, triumphantly taunting Death:

ποῦ σου τὰ κλεῖθρα ὑπάρχει, ὡ ἄθλιε;  
 Ἰησοῦς μου κατῆλθε καὶ συνέτριψε σου πάντα.  
 Ποῦ σου, Αἴδη, τὸ νῦκος, ἢ ποῦ σου τὸ κράτος;  
 Ὁ Θεὸς κατέλυσε τὴν ἴσχυν σου  
 διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως.

26. i' 7-11

*Where are your door-bars, O wretch?  
 My Jesus descended and destroyed all you possessed.  
 Where, Hades, is your victory, or where is your power?  
 God through the resurrection  
 dissolved your strength.*

Whether Romanos sings them in his own *persona* or through sacred *personae*, the *asmata kaina* all spring from the poet's emotions and intuitions.

The originality of Romanos' poetic and religious imagination is most fully revealed in the sacred dramas of his kontakia. Dramatic episodes occupy conspicuously large portions of the kontakia. By means of dramatic monologue and dialogue Romanos skillfully portrayed the character and ethos of sacred persons from the Old and New Testaments. There exists in Romanos' kontakia a memorable gallery of vivid, sensitively drawn portraits: the Magi, seekers after truth and God; Mary, the human mother of a divine son; Symeon, the old man whose wish to see God was granted; John the Forerunner, exalted by the theophany in the Jordan River; Judas, the friendless betrayer; Mary Magdalene, transported to heaven by her encounter with the risen Lord; Thomas, embarrassed by his doubts; the disciples, empowered by their Teacher to evangelize the *oikoumene*.

Through dialogue Romanos enlarged and deepened episodes from Scriptures, turning them into brilliant drama which at times matches the intensity and passion of Attic tragedy. On the basis of a reference in John 19:25 to the presence of Mary at the cross, Romanos created an incomparable masterpiece of lyric drama for Holy Friday. Except for the final strophe the entire kontakion consists of dialogue between Jesus and Mary. Jesus tries to persuade His mother to accept the necessity of His sacrificial death, and Mary pleads in vain with her son to spare Himself. Through these two characters the Byzantine poet probed the agony of the Crucifixion, the absolute of divine *philanthropia*, and the limitations of human love. In addition to the kontakion for Holy Friday, several other masterpieces were cast in dramatic form, the two kontakia for Christmas, the Hypapante, Epiphany, Easter and the Ascension.

Everywhere in the kontakia the Byzantine sacred poet hymned the “inconceivable excellencies of GOD.” Repeatedly in the preludes, refrains and prayers Romanos invoked God, *Χριστέ ὁ Θεός*. Exalting Christ, both man and God, he praised the cosmic sovereignty of Mary’s son and His universal activity as Creator. Yet for Romanos, *philanthropia* is Christ’s most divine and “inconceivable excellency.” The poet worshipped the *pantokrator* who became the self-sacrificing “Good Shepherd” and “Divine Physician,” God incarnate:

προσκυνῶ σου τὸ εὔσπλαγχνον.  
ποτὲ γὰρ δι’ ἐμὲ ἐτέθης ἐν φάτνῃ ἐν τοῖς σπαργάνοις εἰληθείς,  
καὶ νυνὶ τῷ πώλῳ ἐπέβης οὐρανὸν θρόνον κεκτημένος.

16. ξ' 3-5

*I bow before your compassion.  
For then you were placed for my sake in a manger,  
wrapped in swaddling clothes.  
And now possessing heaven for a throne, you ride a donkey.*

Such a direct personal statement is rare in liturgical poetry.

The gentle and humble Messiah riding the donkey inspired Romanos’ lyrical masterpiece for Palm Sunday. In the sacred drama Christ answers an appeal from the crowd that welcomed him to Jerusalem. He describes the love that had brought him from heaven to earth:

τὴν δόξαν μου ἔκρυψα  
καὶ πένης ὁ πλούσιος ἐκών γέγονα· πολὺ γὰρ σὲ ποθῶ.

ἐπείνασα, ἐδίψησα διὰ σὲ καὶ ἐμόχθησα·  
 ἐν ὅρεσι, κρημνοῖς καὶ νάπαις διῆλθον  
 σὲ τὸν πλανώμενον ζητῶν.  
 καὶ διὰ σὲ ψυχὴν θέλω θεῖναι.

16. ψ' 1-4, 6

*I concealed my glory,  
 and I who am rich willingly became poor; for I love you deeply.  
 For your sake I endured hunger, thirst and weariness.  
 Seeking to find you the lost one, I went through mountains,  
 ravines and valleys.*

*And for you I wish to lay down my soul.*

Romanos also sang the “excellencies” of his sacred muse. A luminous Theotokos, almost divine, yet completely human, accessible and compassionate, appears prominently in nine of the fifty-nine extant hymns of Romanos. One kontakion celebrates her Nativity, two the Annunciation. In five Christological kontakia she is a protagonist along with Christ. Painted in the Kyriotissa ikon in the church where Romanos served, Byzantium’s holy mother comes to life in Romanos’ radiant poetry.

In the prelude of the second Nativity Kontakion, Mary, not Christ, is addressed. Nineteen times the refrain proclaims her ἡ κεχαριτωμένη. In the sacred drama she enacts her principal role, humanity’s mediator before God who is her own son. When Adam and Eve come to the cave in Bethlehem begging for mercy, the Theotokos comforts them:

παύσασθαι τῶν θρήψων ὑμῶν,  
 καὶ πρέσβις ὑμῶν γίνομαι πρὸς τὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,  
 ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀπώσασθε τὴν συμφοράν τεκούσης μου τὴν Χαράν.

2. i' 7-9

*Stop your laments,  
 and I am your ambassadress before him who is my child.  
 Cast off misfortune now, since I have given birth to joy.*

The spirit of Christian joy and sympathy, Mary returns mankind to God and paradise.

The circumference of Romanos’ vision enclosed heaven and earth. The sacred poet’s ears heard the angels’ celestial songs. His eyes beheld the ineffable glory of God’s transcendent majesty and power. In his poetry Romanos opened up heaven and revealed God for contemplation and worship by the church.

Likewise his vision encompassed mankind's sacred history and experience of life, from the creation to eternity. Adam and Eve, Israel's kings, prophets and patriarchs, Jesus of Nazareth, the Theotokos, John the Forerunner, the disciples, the saints, and the *laos* of the church all have a place in Romanos' kontakia.

Romanos' profound spiritual faith lives in his kontakia. His hymns ring with the sacred poet's joy, his trust in the Theotokos and in the *philanthropia* of her Son. The unfading beauty and splendor of Romanos' songs proclaim the genius of an authentic poet.



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tered around themes essential to both these events.

The congress ended with a paper by the eminent theologian Yves Congar. Its title (*Autonomie et pouvoir central dans l'Eglise vus par la theologie catholique*) reflects the foremost concern of both Eastern and Western Christians in reconciling the concepts of autonomy and central authority in the Church. Congar's theses left some hope for such a reconciliation:

- 1) Every local church with a bishop is *the Church* in that place.
- 2) The unity of the local churches is assured by their identical faith and sacraments, variations in non-essentials notwithstanding.
- 3) The Church of Rome has the responsibility to preserve the communion of all the local churches, each of which is personified in her.
- 4) This same church has in the past confused unity and uniformity. This is no longer the case, however, and the present time is favorable to a sound pluralism, a vitality of the local churches, and an ecclesiology of the Church understood as communion of the churches.

Congar's understanding of Rome's responsibility to preserve the communion of the local churches differs from that church's pre-Vatican II claims. It is, in fact, reminiscent of the status enjoyed by the see of Rome in the third and fourth centuries. Orthodox reaction to this position was understandably favorable. It remains to be seen, however, how ready our churches are to re-examine this vital question along these lines.

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#### **THE 1979 PRINCETON ACADEMIC SEMINAR ON JEWS AND JUDAISM**

The Princeton Seminar on Jews and Judaism was held at the campus of the Princeton Seminary 12-15 February 1979. Several scholars of Jewish and Christian persuasion gathered to discuss theological issues of importance to both traditions.

The session began on February 12 in the morning with a presentation by Professor Charles West from Princeton. Dr. West spoke on "Faith, Science and Technology." He stated the problem as be-

ing the internal skepticism in science about the possibility of knowing 'Truth' of any phenomenon, and that visible models have become mathematical formulas. He discussed three answers for their solution to know truth. He stated that:

- 1) Scientism rejects the question and assumes that only the quantifiable is real. The universe is indifferent to human hopes and that a thing is explained when we know how it works.
- 2) Organicism, that is, the organic and psychic unity of everything from atoms to stars.
- 3) Social Determinism, that is, that consciousness and knowledge is fundamentally technological and ideological.

Dr. West presented a fourth answer, that of his own. He declared that knowledge of the external world is an objective and a relationship. Since science cannot deal with objective relations, one must move into politics, philosophy and theology to know truth as a dialogue with God and in the sciences, truth is the product of dialogue with human beings.

The second session was presented by Dr. Sid Leiman on "Life-boat Ethics." He discussed the lifeboat case of 1840 by William Brown. He stated the issues as follows: 1) What obligation does each passenger on a ship have to save his own life? 2) What obligation does each have to save others? 3) Is it permissible for ship officers to decide who shall be cast overboard? 4) What criteria determine who lives and who dies? 5) Are there other methods, such as lottery? He pointed out that the instinct is to save oneself at the expense of others.

The Jewish ethical law requires everyone to act, that is, it is duty oriented and that one cannot stand by and observe evil. That is to say, the Jewish ethics require to consider 1) reason, to consider all options, 2) to assume the biblical and rabbinic principles, and 3) examine the context and act accordingly.

The afternoon session was conducted by Professor Charles West. He discussed the method of Christian ethics giving priority to revelation and the Bible as the book containing the story of the event. He stated the central theme of Christian ethics is the intersection that places limits to the relations in view of God's creation. Modern secularism desacralized nature; that is, there is nothing sacred about nature, it is 'stuff.' However, in Christian ethics, nature, design, and order show the glory of God as the psalmist states. He stated that it is idolatry to attribute divine power to people, objects, or given power to the processes; the directives of

the Bible is to completely eliminate 'object' representations of God's powers. Nature has no rights but the humans are obligated to sustain God's creation even by technology such as cultivation. For example, the garden that has been cultivated and cared by human beings praises God better than wilderness.

In the evening session, Rabbi Solomon Bernards discussed Judaism. He stated that Judaism must be understood in terms of its own 'self-understanding.' In the study of the Scriptures, he stated, both Jews and Christians must share the resources that are available. The story of the Holocaust must be told in order to sensitize people to the destruction of the Jews by the Nazis. Rabbi Bernards distributed several bibliographies and materials for the participants' use for further study and discussion.

In the morning session, Dr. Sid Leiman discussed the paper, "The Survival Lottery" by John Harris (*Philosophy*, 50, 1975, pp. 81-8). He discussed the lottery theory in relation to Jewish ethics. He stated in the Hebrew Scriptures the warrant to take life by casting lots is non-existent. In no case should one make an innocent person die.

In the afternoon, Dr. West presented his point of view of justice, responsibility and economics. He stated that in a democratic system the common good excludes many people—e.g., the existence of cultural poverty in America, the absence of the balance of power, and the manipulation of people. The world is revolutionized not by ideas or ideals but by the use of the earth. He stated the Scriptures emphasize that faithfulness to God underlines prosperity. In principle, wealth does not belong to individuals but to God. People are God's stewards.

In the evening, Rabbi Leon Klenicki spoke on "Ideology and Religious Commitment." He analyzed and criticized the 'theology of liberation.' Theology, he emphasized, must be man's critical reflection on himself. Theology must be linked to *praxis* which is a prophetic dynamic related to social criticism of each particular situation. Rabbi Klenicki distributed bibliographical and other material helpful for further reading on the topic.

The last session on Thursday morning was a presentation by Dr. Leiman on "Human in Vitro Fertilization." This was of special interest because of the scientific, ethical and religious significance of the topic. Dr. Leiman said that if one is dangerously rich and can be cured by a remedy that is forbidden by the Torah—this remedy should be used. However, the following is absolutely

forbidden and should never be used: idolatry, adultery and murder. Maimonides does not condone 'therapeutic homicide or murder.' Dr. Leiman discussed the ethical problems of vitro fertilization, artificial insemination and cloning, and the response from a Jewish ethical perspective. The basic issue is how the religious communities related to government policy in matters where there is no unanimity of religions on these topics. To avoid creating a monster, he suggested, the federal government should not fund any research for humans in vitro fertilization until the legal definitions of the birthday, who is the mother and the rights of this creature are made.

The Princeton Seminar on Jews and Judaism came to an end with the participants sharing lunch. The seminar was a rare opportunity for one to learn and share ideas and discussions on interesting common problems and be in fellowship with other scholars of different religious backgrounds. The participants felt a great spiritual and cultural enrichment with their involvement at this seminar. Therefore, I would highly recommend to scholars to attend the next seminar at Princeton in February, 1980. They can be certain that they will enjoy much benefit towards educational enrichment and spiritual and moral edification.

George C. Papademetriou



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## THE ATTITUDE OF THE THREE HIERarchs TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

### I

We have gathered together this evening to celebrate the memory of three great men, who through their strong faith, unstinting intellectual endeavor and militant virtue laid the best foundation of the Orthodox Christian tradition.

In doing this, we are following ancient custom established back in the eleventh century. It was then that, to still disputes among the common folk concerning which of the three, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian or John Chrysostom, was the brightest star in this constellation of fervent and incisive Christian spirits, the Emperor Alexis I Komnenos decreed that they should all be remembered jointly on 30 January every year as the Three Hierarchs of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Their teaching and example, therefore, stirred the people seven centuries after their passing from the scene. And this indicates that they had a message of vital significance for the “average” down-trodden and forgotten person.

It is usual on days like this for the panegyrist to praise their qualities to the skies, by marshalling all available epithets. But it is not infrequent that this exercise degenerates into empty rhetoric, a ritual obscuring their relevance for the living and struggling soul of today. It would not perhaps be too irreverent to claim that the empty adoration of symbols (whether persons or material things), which out of indolence or bad habit does not penetrate to the living essence that the object extolled represents, is a vice that all of us, who in some way or another partake of the Neo-Hellenic cultural and ecclesiastical tradition, are prone to and should hence struggle to emancipate ourselves from.

As a matter of fact, it could be called one of the basic functions of the apophatic method for approaching God founded by the Three Hierarchs that it precisely tried to do away with the obscurantist, mythological and even downright superstitious attachment to external forms that inevitably arises, when an uneducated person reduces the highest mysteries of creation, fall, incarnation and redemption to the mere representations, images and linguistic devices into which they have been put to fit the capacities of our limited human understanding.<sup>1</sup>

Let us then apply this first lesson derived from their work to tonight's celebration of their memory. Let us go beyond the pomposity of thoughtless eulogizing to extract the living and precious core, and let us appropriate the latter for effective use in our own thought and life. As John Chrysostom insisted: "I am telling you these things, not in order to elicit your praises, but so that you may imitate them."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, mindful of the fact that tonight's discourse is given in the setting of this educational institution, I have decided to explore briefly with you the attitude of the Three Hierarchs towards knowledge and learning for the purpose of educated worldly action for the promotion of true justice, and what it may imply for you who have chosen the ministry of the church as your life's vocation.

## II

Sometimes one hears pious persons claim that the only truth and the only knowledge worth bothering about is the knowledge of God and His mysteries, and that consequently by implication the knowledge produced through the application of man's rational faculties to the finite things of the material universe surrounding us is essentially suspect, if not outright condemnable and dangerous. For allegedly it lures man away from God.

Now I would claim that, despite the good intentions of this anti-rationalistic position, it does violence to the spirit of the Church Fathers and especially the Three Hierarchs, whom we are remembering now.

To begin with, all three were in agreement that knowledge of the Essence or *Ousia* of God was impossible.<sup>3</sup> As is well known, to this position they were led in the course of doing battle against the Eunomians. This heresy represented the continuation of Arianism. It claimed that, given the fact that the essence of the Father can be known as His *ἀγεννησία* or eternity without beginning, the Son, having been born of the Father in the fullness of time, is consequently dissimilar (*ἀνόμοιος*) to Him, and hence inferior in divinity.<sup>4</sup>

To combat this line of thought that reduced the Christian faith to a series of neat syllogisms, the Hierarchs countered that it is impermissible to us to apply common logic to the divine essence, as if the human intellect could ever hope to penetrate fully the supreme mystery that is God and the precise way that He relates to His creation. Pure faith alone, the deep awareness of the existence of an ineffable source of all being is the only foundation

for a genuine relation to the Godhead. Despite the fact that we are inwardly certain of the existence of this ultimate unitary root of all visible things, this certainty is an indwelling mystery that has not been arrived at logically, nor can it predicate any known qualities to this Absolute Being it fervently senses and adores.

Perhaps it was Gregory of Nazianzos, who gave the most moving, evocative and, indeed, even passionate summation of this fundamental truth of theology and philosophy, not only in his majestic *Five Theological Orations* (and especially Oration No. 2),<sup>5</sup> but most poignantly in his *Hymn to God* ("Τύμος εἰς Θεόν"), in which the depth of the aesthetic sensibility of this most humanly vibrant and accessible of the three Fathers is made manifest in elegant Greek poetic style drawing with confidence on the riches of the classical tradition:

Oh you who are beyond everything; is it legitimate  
to sing about you any longer?

How can mere words compose your hymn? For no  
word is able to express you.

How can our mind take stock of you? For you are  
not conceivable by any intellect;

You are the only being inexpressible, for you gave  
birth to everything that can be spoken of,

The only being unknowable, because you gave birth  
to everything that can be thought.<sup>6</sup>

The knowledge of God is, therefore, impossible, and whosoever asserts *it* to be the highest goal of human existence is committing a dangerous blunder. St. John Chrysostom accepted this doctrine to the full, but proceeded further to elaborate upon some of its elements. He asked a crucial question: given the fact that the essence of God is inconceivable (*ἀκατάληπτος*), how can the Holy Scriptures and also men of the Church continue to speak about God ascribing to Him various movements, qualities, intentions and actions? How can we say, for example, that God *dwells* in Heaven, that He *loves* the earthly creature, that the Son *sits* on the right side of the Father, and that the Word was *born* of woman?

St. Gregory had already spoken about the *figurative* and inevitably *anthropomorphic* mode of speaking that we *qua* finite beings are compelled to employ, to give some expression, in the only language that we possess, to the mysterious fact of God's existence.<sup>7</sup>

St. Basil has made the distinction between the unknowable essence and the perceptible and hence partially knowable *energies* of God within finitude.<sup>8</sup> St. John expanded these ideas, by forming a

comprehensive doctrine of divine *συγκατάθασις*. This signifies the process, through which the Godhead *condescends* to show itself to the finite creature in and through worldly beings and events, but *not* as He is in Himself in His immutable and non-phenomenal actuality and purity (St. Gregory's notion of the *Beyond*, or *Ἐπέκεινα*), but only in a mode conformable to man's imperfect capacity and strength to see, experience and express in the only language he knows (the language describing his everyday reality) God's power. Hence, when we use terms such as *dwells*, *is born*, etc., we should be careful not to concentrate upon the human content that they enclose and fancy that somehow these earth-bound activities describe literally and adequately that nature and processes of the Godhead. Rather, we must concede that they are the only and imperfect means we possess to give *some* utterance to a metaphysical movement that we sense taking place all around us, engulfing all our being and defying comprehension.<sup>9</sup>

The power and significance of these statements is immeasurable. For, as I have already mentioned, by stressing the mysteriousness and inaccessibility of God's essence, which never appears to us as it is in itself, we are clearly warned against divinizing the material symbols, and the various linguistic conventions and images that we employ here on earth to render "that which vanquishes all thought"<sup>10</sup> merely figuratively, analogically, "*ἀνθρωπικῶς*" (i.e. in a defective, human way).<sup>11</sup>

The superstition of empty ritual and external form for its own sake is thus radically incompatible with the apophatic approach to God, which recognizes that beyond all sensuous representation and all religious language there lies the mystery of a Creator and His descent into the world that can be only sensed through the most strenuous inward labor of faith.

For those of you who perchance have some acquaintance with the history of philosophy, it would be instructive to note that Chrysostom's insistence upon a divine "Essence that never manifests itself naked" to the human eye,<sup>12</sup> as well as his claim that all human speech and reasoning about God never pertains to the way He is in Himself was recapitulated in modern times intact by Immanuel Kant, the founder of modern philosophy, and elaborated into a full system of reason, praxis and faith that laid the foundation for the metaphysical debate still going on even in our own days.

Hence we should not be proud of the Three Fathers only be-

cause they constructed the doctrinal foundation of the Orthodox Church. But beyond that we must also rejoice because their erudition, universality of vision and thorough familiarity with all strains of thought of their time, secular as well as religious, provided robust methodological underpinnings to human thinking in general, which had to be rediscovered by secular philosophy fourteen centuries later.

This aspect of their contribution must be emulated, especially by those who claim to be their most faithful disciples, through eager and inquisitive immersion in the study of the productions of the human intellect in all their rich manifoldness.

Unfortunately, however, those who seek a fictitious and impossible “knowledge of the things of God” couple this misguided quest with an equally deleterious contempt for the things of the human mind and the knowledge of the world that it achieves. But in this manner they precisely reverse the teaching of the Hierarchs, for whom the denial of the possibility of knowing God was the precondition for a liberation of the human mind from superstition and for its fruitful and all-rounded application to what it was designed to accomplish, i.e. the deepest possible knowledge of phenomenal nature. And this brings me to the next part of my presentation.

### III

Faith in Christ, therefore, as the symbol of God’s mysterious Kenosis and love for the created universe and fallen humanity is, according to the Three Hierarchs, the only rule governing our relation to the supreme fountainhead of our being. On this level reason is decidedly subordinate.<sup>13</sup> Faith cannot be reduced to a logical calculus, or a collection of material signs.

But, the question now arises, does this negation of the possibility of rational knowledge of the divine Ousia constitute a rejection of man’s rational nature altogether, and a summary condemnation of scientific discourse and secular wisdom as inherently ungodly? By no means! Only the kind of misdirected “science” that pretends to lay God bare for the human eyes to behold, denuded of all mystery and transcendence (if not to deny His existence altogether), only this kind of pseudo-rationalism is to be shunned. For the rest, the logical element is a God-given component of man’s nature that should be given its due and allowed to be developed to the maximum of its reach.

Far from disproving God or alienating man from Him, the study

of the finite things of the world of appearance in fact corroborates, according to the Three Hierarchs, the thesis of a supreme wisdom governing the universe. We can sense the invisible operation of God by becoming acquainted with the intricate wonder that is nature, the spectacular mechanism of our body, the coherence, harmony and beauty of creation in general.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, rational science only explores and explains the way existing things operate. It does not touch the question of the why and wherefrom of creation and the final purpose of that which is. It just takes being for granted, relegating the rest, quite rightly, to the realm of metaphysical speculation. Thus, there is no inherent conflict between faith and science.<sup>15</sup>

Does faith then somehow necessitate intolerance of learning, stupidity and ignorance as its necessary foundation? Does to be true to Christ mean to shut yourself up in yourself, spurn instruction in the accumulated achievements of the human spirit, and elevate a self-righteous idiocy into some kind of virtuous judge of “things external?” But consider that even such a basic dichotomy between the inner and outer already presupposes a centuries-long process of sharpening of the human understanding to be able to receive this distinction as truth.

Certainly, there is danger in the study of worldly things. And the danger is, as St. Gregory explained, that one might substitute *them* for the true and living God, their Creator, and come to think that they constitute the beginning and end of one's existence. But once we have settled the basic question that faith in a transcendent God is the only and absolute path leading to eternity then this danger is *ipso facto* obviated. Under the presupposition of faith, the world is no longer capable of enslaving one's spirit, and hence one need not be afraid to engage in the thorough study of its structure and functioning. For now to know the world means to know God *in His* world. And if one still persists in refusing to acknowledge the value of philosophical and scientific knowledge, this is only tantamount to a refusal to believe in the providence and the concrete guidance of God, His condescension (*συγκατάβασις*) manifesting itself in and through the nexus of material reality. Then you are refusing to see your God as active and sovereign within the individual and in social life. You are thus separating finite reality from God, turning God into a phantom existing only in unreal imagination, failing to acknowledge His power over the world. For this is what is implied in the statement

that knowledge of man and nature necessarily leads one away from God. For the Three Hierarchs, however, this was not the case at all.

To know the things of nature and society through science and philosophy does not mean to succumb to them. On the contrary, it means to *overcome* them, for to know them truly means to know them as emanations from an infinite consciousness. When you flee the world, by turning ignorance into a positive value, then you are not strong, but actually showing yourself a coward, for you are conceding that you do not possess the power to defeat the world grasping the workings of God in the very fiber of its being.

These statements may seem too rationalistic to some, but for the saints that we are honoring today they were a way of life and passionate circle of belief. This is why of course they are celebrated as patron saints of education and more especially of Greek Letters. For the Classical Greek tradition was the specific body of scientific and philosophical discourse that was available to them in their time. This tradition they studied and they cherished, defending it with vigor against some fanatics who would deny its value in Christian life and thought completely.

Of course, it goes without saying that to the extent that worldly wisdom taught the false gods of the pagans the Three Hierarchs rejected this part of its teaching. This was hardly surprising, for the most advanced spirits among the Greeks themselves, most notably Plato, had already rejected the crudely anthropomorphic conceptions of divinity that dominated earlier times. Certainly, Basil the Great would state, “the fear of the Lord is ~~the~~ beginning of wisdom,” belief in the Christian mysteries negates the foundations of pagan polytheism.<sup>16</sup> But this negation did not apply to the entire content of pagan science as they knew it. Quite to the contrary, the latter, purified from its impious theology, does nevertheless contain solid elements of knowledge in all fields, from whose mastery the Christian soul that felt inclined to them could derive great benefits. For as we already explained above “He who comprehends the Creator from the Creation, he has also known God by means of worldly wisdom,” as Basil expressed it.<sup>17</sup> This kind of wisdom, he goes on, is something real and valuable that should be upheld. That is the reason why Solomon, on whose proverbs Basil was here commenting, dedicated the larger part of his book to urge people to acquire the widest possible spectrum of knowledge. For knowledge is “proud,” and “useful,” and “adequate”

for the security of our lives.<sup>18</sup> But perhaps most important of all is that knowledge supports the community of human-kind, by making possible a rational framework for worldly existence.<sup>19</sup> He, therefore, that lacks wisdom is really sick, and has need of it just like a sick man needs the doctor.<sup>20</sup>

Famous is, of course, St. Basil's exhortation to the Christian youths of his time to become steeped in the wisdom of the Greek thinkers,<sup>21</sup> undaunted by the fact that it contains a number of mistaken notions about the nature of divine principle. Exercising their intellectual superiority, they ought to become strong enough in spirit to brush aside the manifest absurdities interspersed in that magnificent corpus, to appropriate its most fragrant flowers for use in a truly Christian life. And this is possible, St. Basil asserts, because the highest product of the Hellenic mind was not at all the false teachings about the all-too-human gods of polytheism, but on the contrary the pervasive preoccupation of the Greeks with *virtue*, uprightness and justice, concerning which the most profound among them, notably Socrates and Plato, had realized how it flowed from a unitary, spiritual, non-natural, non-anthropomorphic divine fountainhead.

Just as, therefore, we approach a rose-bush with the intention of harvesting the flowers and breaking off the unwanted thorns, in the same manner we should treat the exquisite vine of classical learning, becoming thoroughly acquainted with the persistent practice of lofty virtue that we detect therein and absorbing its example so that it might become a habit in our own spirit as well.<sup>22</sup> St. Basil proceeded to adduce a multitude of examples of self-abnegation in the pursuit of virtue gleaned from the Greek texts, thus also exhibiting the deep grasp of Hellenic culture that he had acquired through long and serious studies of it in Athens and elsewhere. It is to my mind quite remarkable that he finds useful and profitable examples of virtuous life even in Homer, the humanizer of the divine *par excellence*, whom Plato himself, the most spiritual of the Greeks, had rejected out of hand as a preacher of immoral and impious tales and banished along with his devotees from his Polis. The image of the rose-bush employed by Basil is also quite instructive concerning his attitude towards classical letters. For it is self-evident that the fundamental feature of this plant, the one that determines its nature and value for us, is not the fact that it is encumbered with numerous thorns, but rather that it produces those wonderful flowers of which we are so deeply appreciative and thankful as gifts from God. In like manner, what is determin-

ing in the Hellenic achievement is not its relatively secondary failure to fashion a perfect theory of God, but rather the bold strides that were made in that direction and the model of a life of militant virtue along a path towards true divinity that it brought forth. This is, thus, a *positive* attitude towards the accomplishments of the Hellenic spirit, which is all-the-more stunning since in the two centuries preceding the ministry of the Three Hierarchs a bitter conflict had raged between Christian and pagan thinkers, with each side rejecting what its opponent represented.<sup>23</sup>

The Three Hierarchs, therefore, tried to effect an extremely fruitful reconciliation, which without endangering the absolute primacy of revelation and faith, still instructed the Christian to make full use of man's discoveries derived from the application of true reason (*recta ratio*) to nature and human society that was the major project of the Greeks.

Their great appreciation of Platonic philosophy is strikingly evident also in the fact that in their attempt to give a coherent formulation to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity (that was perhaps their supreme achievement and without it Christianity in any of its contemporary forms would have been impossible) they had recourse to the Platonic doctrine of Universals, to account for the unbreakable unity of the three Hypostases ( $\wp\pi\sigma\tau\alpha\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ ) of the Godhead in one Essence (*Oὐσία*).<sup>24</sup> In the final analysis, of course, pure faith and ecclesiastical tradition were affirmed as the ultimate arbiters in these matters.<sup>25</sup> Nonetheless, the penetration of a platonic mode of reasoning into the affirmation of this highest doctrine of the Christian religion, to serve as an intellectual aid for bringing us closer to the ultimate mystery, is highly significant and testifies adequately to the universality of the Fathers, their profound culture, open mindedness and positive evaluation of secular thought.

Today, when some people might be inclined to paint an implacable antithesis between devotion to God on the one hand, and critical inquiry and encyclopedic learning in science and the arts on the other, it would benefit us greatly to recall the example of the Three Hierarchs, not to proffer vacuous adoration, piling words on top of words, but by making their teaching a reality in our own sphere of existence, and before all else in our school that would profit from an infusion of bold and liberal thinking and initiative on these matters.

For after all, we are also dedicated to the study, preservation, and propagation of Greek civilization and the Greek language. And

in this field we should aspire to the most brilliant results, for we do have the ability to achieve them. And to this we should look not as if it were an unpleasant obligation, but as the cultivation of one of the most precious components of Orthodoxy itself. Hellenic thought is, as the Three Hierarchs amply realized, the repository of some of the most eternal and universal ideas that the human mind was ever graced to conceive. And beyond this, it was in the Greek language that the Evangelists and Apostles chose under dispensation from Christ to spread the Good News of redemption to the world.

Has it occurred to you that if St. Basil were to deliver his speech to the youth anew today we would be among his listeners? In his own time, the achievement of the Greeks represented the fruition of all human cultural endeavor. Today philosophy and science have made giant progress, along of course the path that the Greeks first charted. Therefore, his admonitions apply to the best products of our own culture and civilization as well, whose flowers we have a sacred duty to harvest and to integrate into our spiritual synthesis. If the Italian Renaissance understood this full well, appropriating St. Basil's message and turning it into a standard of that stupendous movement of reaffirmation of the spirituality of human nature and the world at large, how can we afford to ignore it today, especially we, members of the Orthodox communion, who are supposed to be the most faithful champions of these teachings? And if we *do* ignore it, going out into the world tomorrow to become leaders and pastors of souls, how can our ignorance, uncouthness, contempt for the things of the mind, total darkness concerning the laws, the processes and torments of human nature stand us in good stead, when we try to win the confidence of people and become close to them?

Let us, therefore, take to our hearts the teaching of the Fathers that we are celebrating tonight. Let us especially ponder the following statement of Gregory of Nazianzos, which summarizes in succinct manner all the thoughts that were developed in the previous pages, and was quite appropriately contained in his oration in memory of his recently deceased friend, Basil the Great:

I am of the opinion that it has been accepted by all reasonable men that *learning* occupies the foremost rank among human goods, and not simply our own (that is Christian learning), . . . but also the external, worldly one, which many Christians reject as dangerous and harmful and leading away from God,

*without judging well . . .* From this learning we accept gladly everything that helps us in the exploration of nature and in the interpretation of phenomena, while that which leads to the acceptance of demons and deceit and the abyss of destruction we reject.

But I should not neglect to add that even the latter can be of benefit, for from the evil we are taught of the good, reinforcing our spiritual education by learning of its weakness. Hence we must not condemn worldly culture because a few want it this way. But we must consider foolish and coarse those that think in this way, for they would like everyone generally to be like them, so that their private defects might be covered up in a general ignorance, and thus their lack of culture might escape censure.<sup>26</sup>

Listen to these words! They exhibit a rare solidity of spirit, fearlessness and self-confidence that the Christian view of the world is truth and therefore it can withstand attack from any quarter; it can handle every opinion, even the most hostile one without becoming submerged; it can utilize the weapons of every opponent to defeat him on his own ground and even profit in the process from the enemy's mistakes.

Pious and mystical devotion to God, thus, does not in the least require the atrophy of reason and the glorification of mindlessness. Intellectual sloth, intolerance of differing opinions, and the insularity of ignorance that prides itself only of a smart-alecky approach to serious subjects do not make a good Christian, but are on the contrary the fertile breeding-ground of superstition, a caricature of faithfulness.

#### IV

I want to finish tonight's presentation with a few considerations on virtue. It is clear from the writings, but more importantly from the life itself of the Three Hierarchs, that knowledge for them was not valuable in and of itself as a mere mental exercise. The supreme end was a life concretely in accordance with the commands of Jesus, a life filled with Christian works in implementation of the obligations of brotherly love. Knowledge, consequently, is to be esteemed as a means of becoming acquainted with the creations of God, so that one might become strengthened and persevere in the total experience of faith. There was no compromise to be made on this score, and they scolded severely the hypocrites who followed only the external forms of religiosity without inner

warmth, and who left the teachings of love and mutual assistance at the doorstep of the church heading for home and for "real life." On the contrary for the Three Hierarchs spirituality was a constant exercise (*athlesis*) of the soul in the very midst of the adverse circumstances of everyday existence, an attempt to alter the worldly environment to make it more conformable to the ideal of a Christian community united in love and mutual service in the name of Jesus.

In point of fact, *community*, with all the implications of devotion to our fellow as an image of our own being (*φιλανθρωπία, φιλαλληλία*), was a cardinal category of their thought. Again, it would serve us well to ponder the significance of their pursuit of true community and brotherly devotion realized here on earth in an age such as ours, in which the grabbing impulse has been turned into the highest policy of state, and the obsession with personal gratification and material gain in total disregard of higher values of communal realization and of the needs and feelings of our fellow human beings seem to be running rampant.

The ideal of communal man, i.e., the definition of the individual as a subordinate part of a larger whole outside which he is inconceivable, was also one of the most lofty achievements of the Greek mind, and especially of the philosophy of Aristotle who described man as a *ζῶον πολιτικόν*. The Fathers found that notion ready-made in classical thought, and they took it over eagerly, at the same time of course depriving it of its exclusively worldly-political significance.<sup>27</sup> For indeed the community of faith was now headed by an invisible leader and dedicated to the cultivation of a new ethos preparing man for an otherworldly salvation.

Spiritual community, thus, looms large in the world-view of the Three Hierarchs, who were interested in defining the conditions under which mankind as an integrated whole, without discrimination of race, nationality, sex or social class, would be molded into a great flock under Christ's guidance. In this manner they were of course expanding upon the original idea of St. Paul. Hence, all three of them singled out very vigorously those vices that worked against this great schema of unity and subjected them to vehement condemnation: vanity, greed, selfishness, hypocritical religiosity and debauchery were all denounced in their strictures.

Perhaps special mention should be made of their severe censure of the rich and powerful who abuse and exploit the weak and the poor. Page after page of spirited oratory is devoted to this subject, and the conditions of life of the underprivileged of this world are

painted with the blackest colors.<sup>28</sup> This shows us once again that the Three Hierarchs were not at all indifferent to the social conditions of their times, but rather dedicated the greater part of their active life to correcting the evil consequences of moral degradation, chief among which was, according to their own understanding, the rapacity of the higher strata. They did not adopt a hands-off attitude, preaching toleration of injustice and acquiescence in oppression, but by instructing the rich that what they owned belonged to God and hence was to be managed for the benefit of all,<sup>29</sup> and actively succoring the poor through extensive schemes of social welfare, they showed that they sought to reorganize our mundane environment, so that the actual material conditions of universal equality and brotherhood and mutual help might be established, under which alone the soul can be justly expected to look beyond worldly cares in contemplation of the mystery of divine love. As far as they were concerned, therefore, the trampling of the weak by the powerful disrupted the spiritual unity of the body of Christ, and made a mockery of the "obligatory command"<sup>30</sup> of poverty and philanthropy and of our obligation to minister to our stricken brothers' needs and to share with them all we own. Not only, of course, did they preach this highest expression of Christian virtue, as contribution towards the realization of the true community of love, but also offered themselves as living examples on this path. St. Basil's unrelenting efforts and the dedication of his entire property to the support of the poor are well-known and need not be described here in detail. It was precisely for this reason that their memory was kept burning in the hearts of the people, for in the Three Hierarchs they had found true defenders of the rights and spiritual dignity of the lowly.

It is also well-known that in their denunciation of the injustices of the powerful, the Three Hierarchs frequently came into conflict with persons in high office in the secular order, who, although professing the Christian faith outwardly, were in fact the main instruments of impious oppression. But the prospect did not intimidate them. They persevered in their attack on privilege and its attendant corruption and they suffered severe consequences for it. The facts are again known to all, and I need just remind you of St. John Chrysostom's struggle against a talented but fickle and corrupt Empress and her Court, that eventually led to his exile and death. We can also recall St. Basil's courageous stand in the face of the tyrannical encroachments of the Arian Emperor Valens. This militant attitude in defense of the social ideals of Christianity

against errant and oppressive secular authority and on behalf of the poor is the last lesson from the life of the Three Hierarchs that I want to underline tonight.

When I look at our own society today, with its infinite ideological divisions, moral degeneration, glorification of the selfish instinct, and continued oppression of the weak everywhere, despite demagogical oratory supposedly in their favor, I cannot help but think that we have not made any significant progress beyond the age of our great Fathers, except perhaps in the negative sense that nowadays we have also manufactured for the first time in history the means to blow ourselves out of existence altogether. Their message does, therefore, retain a great degree of freshness and topicality.

If, then, we really want to honor them in a meaningful way, and not as dead objects in a museum, we should put into contemporary practice their teachings, and especially their call for intellectual curiosity, originality and breadth, and steadfast virtue in opposition to all tyranny and injustice. Heeding their exhortations, let us raise, all of us working together, the educational standards of our school. With responsibility and earnestness let us make a commitment to excellence in all fields, a commitment to the treasures of the Greek language and thought and to Orthodoxy. And then let us go out into the world with an eye for our wounded and suffering brothers who must be our primary concern. For:

“Blessed be those that hunger and thirst for justice, for they shall be filled.

And:

Blessed be those that are persecuted because they seek justice, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”

These are the people on whose side it is our duty to be following the example of the Three Hierarchs.

#### NOTES

1. Concerning the problem of “de-mythologization” of the Christian dogmas and apophatic theology as the proper mode of de-mythologization, see G.A. Galites, *Modern Trends in Interpretation and the Three Hierarchs* (Thessalonike: Publications of the Aristotelian University of Thessalonike, 1971), pp. 24-25 (In Greek).

2. John Chrysostom, "On Alms-Giving," in *Works*, 36 (Athens, 1973), p. 194.
3. John Chrysostom, "To Eutropios II" in *Works*, 10 (Athens, 1973), ancient text 392C-395E; G.A. Galites, *Modern Trends*, pp. 20-24; P.C. Chrestou, "John Chrysostom" and "Gregory Nazianzos" in the *Religious and Ethical Encyclopedia* (Athens, 1963) 6, pp. 1170-1192 and 4, pp. 708-729, respectively.
4. P.C. Chrestou, "Gregory of Nazianzos," *ibid.* See also editor's Introduction, pp. x-xi, to the Greek Text of Gregory of Nazianzos, *The Five Theological Orations*, ed. A.J. Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1899).
5. Gregory of Nazianzos, *The Five Theological Orations*, Oration 2, pp. 21-72.
6. W. Christ-M. Paranikas eds., *Anthologia Graeca Carminum Christianorum* (Hildesheim, 1973), p. 24. My translation from the Greek.
7. Gregory of Nazianzos, *The Five Theological Orations*, pp. 40-43.
8. G.A. Galites, *Modern Trends*, p. 21.
9. John Chrysostom, "To Eutropios II", in *Works*, vol. 10 and especially ancient text 394C-D.
10. *Ibid.*, 393E.
11. *Ibid.*, 394A.
12. *Ibid.*, 394C: Όδέ γυμνή ἡ οὐσία φαίνεται.
13. Gregory of Nazianzos, *The Five Theological Orations*, p. 66: "Πίστις δέ ἀγέτω πλέον ἡμᾶς ή λόγος." Also pp. 106-107.
14. *Ibid.*, Oration 2, pp. 29-31. Also chs. 22-30, in which the magnificence of nature is praised, and contemplation of its wonders is stressed as a way of praising the Wisdom of God.
15. On this important topic, see Book 3: Cosmology – The Interpretation of Nature in A.E. Taylor's, *Elements of Metaphysics* (London – N.Y., 1961), pp. 191-293.
16. Basil the Great, "On the Beginning of Solomon's Proverbs," in *Works* (Thessalonike, 1973), vol. 7, p. 370 (In Greek).
17. *Ibid.*, p. 366.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 368.
19. *Ibid.*
20. *Ibid.*, p. 370: 'Ως γάρ οι ἀσθενοῦντες χρήσουσιν ιατρικῆς, οὕτω σοφίας οι ἀφρονες ἐπιδέουνται.
21. Basil the Great, "To the Youth on How to Derive Profit from Greek Letters," in *Works*, pp. 316-359.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 326.
23. See. J. Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition*, (Chicago – London, 1971), pp. 27-41.
24. *Ibid.*, pp. 219, 221.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
26. Gregory of Nazianzos, *Oration on the Tomb of Basil the Great*, ed. G.D. Metallenos (Athens, n.d.), pp. 34-36. My translation from the Greek, emphasis added.
27. See P.C. Chrestou, "Basil the Great," *Religious and Ethical Encyclopedia*, 3 (Athens, 1963), pp. 681-696.
28. See Basil the Great, "Homily to the Rich," in *Works*, vol. 6, pp. 284-321. Gregory of Nazianzos, "On Love Towards the Poor," in *Homilies of the Three Hierarchs*, ed. P. Stamos (Athens, 1969), pp. 20-51. John Chrysostom, "On Alms-Giving," in *Works*, vol. 36, pp. 186-205.
29. Gregory of Nazianzos, "On Love Towards the Poor," pp. 38-40.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.



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*The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire.* By Derwas J. Chitty. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1977. Pp. xvi, 222. Paper, \$5.95.

This work is the expanded version of the Birkbeck lectures given at Cambridge in 1959-60, as is noted in the author's introductory comments. In the preface Chitty (an Anglican parish clergyman) explains some of his reasons for his lifelong fascination with the subject, and makes clear his personal sympathy for the movement he describes.

In his first few chapters, Chitty expounds on the beginnings of monasticism in Egypt, both eremitic and cenobitic, as depicted in the *Vitae* of the pioneers, Anthony and Pachomios. Chitty then describes the golden age of organized monasticism in Egypt, the Origenistic controversies in the early fifth century, the varied fortunes of the movement, and the impact of the Christological controversies in the fifth century. Turning to monasticism in Palestine, Chitty describes its beginnings and swift success under Euthymios and his followers. Furthermore, the author sets forth in great detail the crucial role played by the monastic establishment in the eventual acceptance of the Chalcedonian settlement by the majority of Palestinian Christians. The last chapters tell the story of Palestinian monasticism in the sixth and seventh centuries, down to the Arab conquest of Jerusalem (A.D. 638) and the obscure history of monasticism in the Sinai peninsula.

Despite occasional lacunae and unevenness (in part to be attributed to the genesis of the text as a set of public lectures), this is a truly excellent work, based on a broad and intimate acquaintance with the sources. Much meticulous scholarship is hidden in the dense and lengthy notes, collected at the end of the several chapters, material which may easily be overlooked by the casual reader. There is no other comparable modern survey available, and the great usefulness of the work is indisputable. There is one major gap, however, in this reviewer's opinion. Though the author purposely restricted his survey geographically to Egypt and Palestine, it is nonetheless regrettable that only scant attention is paid to more extreme forms of asceticism as practiced in Syria, and that the whole question of the relationship of Egyptian and Syrian monasticism has not been discussed. Have Syrian practices and monastic ideology exerted no influence whatsoever on Palestine? (In this connection, the absence of any reference to A. Vööbus' important *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* (Louvain, 1958-60) is glaring!)

Unfortunately, no updating of bibliography is appended to the present reprint of the book, which first appeared in 1966; a few added entries may therefore be useful. At the same time that *The Desert a City* was published, Chitty's own critical edition of the first part of a major Greek source appeared ("Barsanuphius and John. Questions and Answers," *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 31, fascicle 3 (Paris, 1966), up to chap. 124 only). The author died in 1971 and no more of the promised installments have come out. Etheria's travel journal is now available in J. Wilkinson's excellent annotated transla-

tion. The Greek text of a collection of letters of Pachomios have recently been published by H. Quecke. The Syriac version of the *Asceticon* of Abba Isaias has been published by R. Draguet and on Jerome we have now a full-scale biography by J.N.D. Kelly.

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*The Reluctant Vision: An Essay in the Philosophy of Religion.* By T. Patrick Burke. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974. Pp. 136. Paper, \$3.00.

The present work is an attempt by Professor Patrick Burke to interpret and analyze the phenomenon of religion and religious experience to the contemporary philosopher. As professor of religious thought at Temple University, he clearly understands the problem of analyzing the method of the philosophy of religion and of interpreting the moral principles of religion in relation to the meaning and purpose of life.

Dr. Burke is critical of the traditional method of the philosophy of religion that examines the questions of proofs for the existence of the theistic God and the language about God in Judaeo-Christian restricted framework. Burke complains that traditionally the philosophers of religion do not philosophize about religion itself; they overlook the important connections of the dialectical relationship between religion and art, religion and thought, between ethical and mythical religion, and such other important topics and issues as value-theory and purpose in life.

Dr. Burke takes up the issue of philosophy of religion with a new approach and emphasizes the positive forces in all the world religions. He does not only speak about the Judaeo-Christian philosophical study of religion, but also he pays major attention to the religions of India and China in his discussion of the religious condition in today's society. Professor Burke states:

“Judaism as a religion is based on such assertions as that Moses led the Hebrew people out of Egypt, and that he received the Torah for them from God. For the believing Jew these are not matters of detached interest, they are the foundation on which everything else in his religion rests. The same is true of the Islamic assertion that God revealed the Koran to Mohammed, and that Mohammed is the last and greatest of the prophets. Similarly, Christianity informs us that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead, that there are three persons in God, that there is a final judgment, and an eternal life. The Scriptures of Hinduism tell us that ultimate reality is one, that individuality is an illusion, that the deepest depth of the soul of man, the Atman, is identical with the Absolute, Brahman, and that there is such a thing as reincarnation. In each case a set of assertions gives a basis to the religion” (p. 12).



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## THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH, SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF ORTHODOX ECCLESIOLOGY AND HISTORY

Initiated primarily by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the various activities which involve the preparation of an Orthodox council inevitably raise the issue of the exact position of that patriarchate among the local Orthodox Churches. If – by the grace of God – the council takes place, or if – also by the grace of God – the various consultations and commissions presently working towards an Orthodox consensus on the issues of the day simply result in formal agreements, which will lay the basis for progress and greater unity, the position of the ecumenical patriarchate will certainly come up in a clearer form, whether it is maintained or reinforced, or reduced, or given new forms of operation. Inasmuch as the issues facing the Orthodox Church today are primarily those of a united witness in a changed world and of more adequate ecclesial structures, which would make such a witness more meaningful, and, inasmuch as the traditional role of the ecumenical patriarchate consisted precisely in exercising leadership in those areas, the success or failure of its recent initiatives will determine the patriarchate's own historical future.

As we all know, present realities in the Orthodox Church are not created by theological factors only. They are also shaped by historical realities of the past and by purely empirical – primarily political – circumstances of the present. We will all agree, however, that the particular task of *theologians* consists in distinguishing permanent and absolute values from historical contingencies, in helping the Church to keep its identity unadulterated by the inevitable changes of conditions in which its witness is to be presented to the world; in defining what is Holy Tradition, and what are human traditions, of which some are legitimate and valuable, and some can harm the witness of the Church, and as such, are to be rejected.

The courageous and relevant decision of our Society to discuss, at this conference, the issues which are presently confronting the Orthodox Church in relation with the future council, is a sign that we do not understand theology as a purely academic occupation, and that we want theology to help the Church in its historical pilgrimage. Furthermore, we want to assert the rights of theology

to provide the determining factors of conciliar decisions. If the forthcoming council is determined only by politics, it will undoubtedly be a pseudo-council! So, we theologians can and must render the Church a liberating service, and should not fail to do so.

My own paper on the Ecumenical Patriarchate does not pretend to great originality. It is not, as far as I can see, very controversial. Its only goal is to bring to our attention those theological and historical considerations without which a discussion of the role of the Ecumenical Patriarchate leads inevitably to a dead end, both in its pan-Orthodox and in its ecumenical dimensions.

#### **Primacy in Early Christian Ecclesiology.**

It is a well-recognized fact that neither the New Testament, nor the sub-apostolic writings provide a clear formal description of church structure. During the first two centuries of the Christian era, there existed nothing really similar to later formulae of canon law. Of course, the Pastoral Epistles and such documents as the *Didache*, or even, in the third century, the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus contain precious information, but they refer to local communities and local situations, so that scholarship, using formal historical methods, is generally reluctant to accept this information as a generalizing pattern. This means, however, that to understand the realities of the Early Church, one must go beyond the careful agnosticism of 'pure historians.' One must also appeal to the *theological* content of the New Testament, and to the writings of such fathers as Ignatios, Irenaeos and Cyprian. Here one discovers the authentic ecclesial experience of the early Christian communities, the soteriological and eschatological meaning of the sacramental mystery, performed in each community, and the fact that the structure of the Church was not shaped by some authoritarian decree, or some special legislative foresight of Christ, or His apostles, but that it came into existence in virtue of the very nature of the Church, by divine will, after Pentecost.

Therefore, to understand and to agree upon the character of the ministries in the early Church, and upon the structure of early Church polity, one should first acquire a common sense of the Church itself. This pre-requisite constitutes the major difficulty in contemporary ecumenical discussions, which often result in formal, conceptual agreements on particular issues, but lack the basic reference to a common perception of the Church itself, and, therefore, fail to lead towards real unity.

In Orthodox ecclesiology, the fundamental importance of the

local community, centered around the eucharist and manifesting the reality of the Kingdom of God in its totality, in its universality, in its catholicity, has remained consistent with the tradition found in Ignatios, Irenaeos, and Cyprian. In particular, it provides the basis for the Orthodox understanding of the episcopate, which presupposes the inseparable unity between each bishop and his community, as well as the identity and, therefore, the equality of all bishops. I will not describe again the fundamentals of that early Christian and Orthodox understanding of the Church, which has been — with individual nuances, but brilliantly — expounded by several contemporary Orthodox theologians, including particularly Nicholas Afanassieff and John Zizioulas. One should note also that the recently published, authoritative work by the Metropolitan of Sardis, Maximos, on the Ecumenical Patriarchate also accepts these fundamental historical and ecclesiological presuppositions as a starting point of its description of the rise of the Constantinopolitan primacy. Indeed, an Orthodox theologian, or historian cannot do otherwise. The eucharistic assembly, presided by the bishop, is the fullest manifestation of the Church catholic, although it is always a *local* event. It gathers all the Orthodox Christians living in a given place. Its authenticity is conditioned by *three factors*: unity of faith with the apostles and fathers of the past, unity with all the other Orthodox communities of the present, and *real communion* in the Kingdom of God, which is still to come and which is anticipated in the eucharistic mystery. Without those three elements there can be no true Church.

If there is no continuity in the apostolic faith, there is a denial of the redemptive fullness given in Christ, “once for all” (*apax*). If there is no concern for ‘horizontal’ unity in truth with the entire Church universal, there is only congregationalism. And finally, if there is no real communion in the Kingdom to come, in the Bread which comes from heaven, and in the Cup of the New and everlasting Covenant, there is only a gathering for Bible study, a theological lecture, or friendly emotions.

There is no doubt that the Early Church was eminently concerned with these three ecclesiological aspects — the apostolic, the ‘horizontal,’ the eschatological — and did not tend, as so many Christians have done in later centuries, to *reduce* ecclesiality to only one of these three dimensions. The reductions, as we all know, have resulted in either formal dogmatic conservatism, or institutional authoritarianism, or in various forms of charismatic,

or pseudo-charismatic apocalypticisms.

Inasmuch as I am concerned with a particular aspect of early Christian ecclesiology – the development of *primacies* on the local, or universal levels – I will briefly discuss here only the two first dimensions, since they were so often (and inevitably) connected with the primacies: the preservation of the apostolic witness and the ‘horizontal’ unity in faith between the local churches.

The necessity for every local church to maintain continuity with the apostolic faith and witness is the basis of what we call ‘apostolic succession.’ In interpreting that essential aspect of Christian ecclesiology, some unfortunate reductions have also taken place among which the gradual – almost imperceptible – growth of a new consciousness in the Church of Rome of being more particularly ‘apostolic’ than others. It is not necessary to recall here the age-long debate between East and West about the nature of the Roman primacy. But it is certainly useful to remind ourselves once more of the polarity between two ideas of ‘apostolicity,’ the Roman and the Eastern, well defined by a man, Fr. Francis Dvornik, who was not a theologian, but was able to unveil important theological truths by simply being a good historian. Whereas Rome developed the idea that certain local churches possessed primacy in virtue of their ‘apostolic foundation,’ the East remained quite aloof to that idea. Jerusalem, the ‘mother of all the churches,’ contented itself in the fourth century with its pagan name of *Aelia Capitolina*, and acquired a certain prestige (which always remained local) only when in the fourth century it became a center of pilgrimage. On the other hand, the great centers of Alexandria and Constantinople – which superseded, not only Jerusalem but also the unquestionable ‘apostolic’ Church of Antioch – did so without any pretense to apostolic foundation. The legends about St. Mark founding Christianity in Alexandria, or St. Andrew, as a preacher in Byzantium, were exploited much later, primarily as arguments (very weak arguments indeed!) against papal claims. But anyone familiar with the writings of Athanasios, or Cyril of Alexandria, or with those of Chrysostom, or Photios, or Philotheos Kokkinos of Constantinople – and with the historical circumstances of their activity, knows well that neither St. Mark, nor St. Andrew had anything to do with their awareness of being leaders among their fellow bishops.

Quite allergic to the idea that God could have kept Jerusalem,

or established any other place, as a divinely established, permanent center of the universal church, they rather recognized as decisive the *pragmatic realities of history*, which have lead Alexandria and Constantinople to become economic, political and intellectual centers. Since all local churches (and not only such venerable and apostolic sees as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc.) were manifesting the *same* kingdom in the *same* fullness, celebrating the *same* eucharist and holding the *same* faith, it was only natural to recognize the leadership of those bishops, who presided over churches with material and intellectual means to substantiate that leadership, to make it real and constructive.

And since the most obvious and even overwhelming pragmatic reality of the fourth century was the universal Christian empire of Constantine and his successors, it was inevitable that the imperial capital would eventually supersede Alexandria and would become in the late sixth century an 'ecumenical patriarchate.' However, since the empire had remained technically 'Roman,' the bishop of the 'Old Rome' continued to be considered as the 'first bishop' of the universal church. But Rome also happened to be one of the churches founded by the Apostles themselves. This gave an opportunity to many Byzantines — especially those who were in conflict with their own emperors and patriarchs — to use occasionally the arguments, which the bishop of Rome particularly appreciated and which referred to the apostolic foundation of Roman Christianity by St. Peter and St. Paul, the *Korypahaioi* of the apostolic college.

Thus, for several centuries before the schism, an ambiguous situation prevailed, which allowed for a coexistence in the universal church of the Western 'apostolic' criterion of primacy, with the Eastern 'pragmatic' interpretation. The contrast which appears between this 'pragmatism' of the early Eastern church and of medieval Orthodox on the one hand, and on the other, the honorary primacy held in our own contemporary Church by the ancient patriarchates of the East, whereas the historical reasons which justified that primacy in the past have disappeared, is obvious. However, I will not insist on it, because I believe that the role played by the Empire in shaping the structures of the Byzantine church (including the elevation of the Eastern patriarchate to the position of primacy) should not, and cannot serve as model for us today. Orthodox ecclesiology certainly presupposes the equality of all local churches, and therefore allows, so to say, an equal opportunity for anyone of them to assume a leading role. But it

would be a real catastrophe, if socio-political factors were officially admitted again as the only decisive criterion for such elevation, as they were at the time of the Empire. In fact, the identification of the church with secular values is already with us – particularly in the form of ‘phyletism’ – but, fortunately, it is not sanctioned by any canonical criterion and, therefore, can be opposed and fought against.

So, apostolicity, apostolic tradition, and apostolic faith cannot be monopolized by any church, or any bishop. Such is the legacy of the early Christian and patristic periods. The various forms of primacy of certain bishops above their peers – the metropolitan in a province, the patriarch in a wider area, as well as the univeral primacy of the Ecumenical Patriarch – follow no other criterion than the historical, or pragmatic one. However, this pragmatic realism was not a form of capitulation before secular norms, an easy adaptation to political structures, but a dynamic and living ability of the Church *to preserve* her own norms, her own principles of polity, her own divinely established eucharistic structures in the midst of contemporary realities. In Orthodoxy today, this dynamism still exists on the level of popular piety, liturgy and even theology, whereas on the level of wider church structures there unfortunately is either an adaptation to historical realities of one thousand years ago, or else to most unacceptable aspects of the politics and nationalism of modern states, which are shamelessly using the Church in their own egoistic and conflicting interests.

The task of the future Council – if it is to take place, and if it is a true Orthodox Council, and not a pseudo-council – is to lay ground for a gradual restoration of the dynamic relationship between theology and reality, between the eucharistic community and church structures, between the task of saving souls, for which the Church exists, and the image offered by contemporary Orthodoxy to the world around it.

The second essential dimension of early Christian ecclesiology, which also motivates the existence of primacies, is concern for Church unity, particularly through the episcopate. Although the clergy and laity of each local church have undoubtedly the right to nominate candidates to the episcopal dignity in that Church, the consecration of each new bishop is a concern of all local churches and requires the participation, at least through proxy, of the *whole* episcopate of the Church. In practice, only the neighboring

bishops, at least two or three of them, participate in the laying-on of hands. Their participation always implied (and still implies today), that the newly consecrated bishop becomes a member of the universal college of bishops, because, as St. Cyprian wrote, "the episcopate is one" (*episcopatus unus est*) and each bishop, when he is enthroned in his particular church, acquires the fullness of the dignity which belongs to all (*in solidum pars tenetur*).

The necessity for the participation of several bishops in each new episcopal consecration served as the basic motivation for regular meetings of bishops (*synodoi*), which became canonically institutionalized in the fourth century. In each province of the empire, all the bishops were required to meet twice a year, under the presidency of the bishop of the main city of the province (*metropolis*), and solve doctrinal or disciplinary issues which required a common witness. The canonical legislation of the fourth century, especially that of the Council of Nicaea, was clearly aiming at preserving the integrity of each local church and securing the unity of all churches by assuring territorial unity everywhere, and by following pragmatically the administrative divisions of the empire. In each province, there was now a church enjoying full administrative independence and following in its organization no other criterion than the evangelical principle or 'neighborhood.' The Orthodox Church today is supposed to apply the same model in each of its so-called 'autocephalies.' In fact, however, there exists today major and very disturbing ecclesiological and canonical departures from the Nicaean model: 1) some of the present 'provinces' (i.e., the 'autocephalous' churches) are so large that true episcopal conciliarity is impracticable and is replaced by a system of patriarchal bureaucracy (the restoration of the old pattern of ecclesiastical provinces was widely discussed in Russia in 1905-1917, but never saw light); 2) In some churches (particularly Constantinople and Russia) not all the ruling bishops are members of the 'Synod.' The so-called 'permanent' Synod ceased to promote conciliarity and has become an organ of bureaucratic administration exercising power *over* other bishops, 3) Some national churches practically replaced the territorial principle of church unity with an ethnic one: this is the heresy of 'phyletism,' condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 1872; 4) In some churches, 'titular' bishops, as members of synods, play a role totally detached from the pastoral and sacramental responsibilities which ecclesiologically justify the very existence of the episcopal

ministry.

I consider these factors as substantial departures from Orthodox ecclesiology itself: they should be squarely faced, condemned and, if possible, corrected by the future council.

But let us take a step further in our discussion of primacy. We have seen that the idea of divine, or apostolic establishment of primacy in particular places was foreign to early Christian ecclesiology, at least in the East. The same point can be made in reference to the provincial primacies of 'metropolitans': with a very few exceptions, the importance of cities determined the place of residence of ancient metropolitans. Pragmatism prevailed here, too. However, the very *idea* of primacy was very much a part of ecclesiology itself; the provincial episcopal synods needed a president, without whose sanction no decision was valid. Similarly, there existed an 'order' (*taxis*) in the apostolic college itself. Such is indeed an inevitable requirement of the very existence of the Church in the world: it must present a united witness, and this unity must be channeled and symbolized by concrete canonical structures.

The regional 'primacies,' which united several 'provinces' and eventually developed into so-called 'patriarchates,' have played a great role in history, but their form, number, authority, and importance have varied greatly. For example, the mythical system of 'pentarchy,' which was formally sanctioned by Emperor Justinian at a time when it had practically already ceased to exist, is something used as an Orthodox alternative to the papacy, but its ecclesiastical meaning is impossible to define and its importance is limited to being a sort of symbolic model of universal conciliarity.

Much more significant is the issue of universal primacy, which does possess a scriptural and ecclesiastical basis. Orthodox anti-Latin polemics have rightly emphasized the pragmatic and political origin of all the primacies, including the primacy 'among equals,' held by the pope of Rome before the schism. It is a fact, however, that there has never been a time when the Church did not recognize a certain 'order' among first the apostles, then the bishops, and that, in this order, one apostle, St. Peter, and later, one bishop, heading a particular church, occupied the place of a 'primate' ("first, Simon, who is called Peter," Mat. 10:2, cf. Mk. 3:16). During the years which followed Pentecost, the Mother-Church of Jerusalem clearly occupied that position and was presided, first, by Peter and the Twelve, and later by James, when the Twelve became itinerant apostles. The eventual disappearance of the

Judeo-Christian community in Jerusalem ended the primacy of that original Mother-Church, and as we have seen earlier, it was not claimed by the new church of Jerusalem, made up of Gentiles, which was reestablished under Constantine. By that time, through ways difficult to follow in detail, the church of Rome acquired a primacy, which is witnessed in a variety of ways by early writers, including (perhaps) Clement and Ignatios, and certainly Irenaeos and Cyprian. Historically, the Byzantine (and Orthodox) interpretation of that process – ‘Rome was the capital and the major city’ – is probably right. It is difficult to imagine that the tradition about Peter’s death in Rome would have been, in itself, sufficient to justify Rome’s primacy, as the later papal tradition claims. In any case, the Roman bishop did become the ‘first bishop’ of the universal church: his seniority was always maintained, especially in the canons (II Const. 3; Chalc. 28) which defined the position of ‘New Rome,’ Constantinople. However, and this is the real ecclesiological difference between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, the Roman primacy had no indelible character: it was *conditioned* by the pope’s doctrinal orthodoxy, and was not the source of that orthodoxy. The schism occurred precisely because the West believed that the pope, in virtue of his primacy, was doctrinally always right, and that primacy would never be removed from Rome. After the schism, Constantinople was left with primacy in Orthodoxy.

I would venture to affirm here that, in my opinion, the universal primacy of one bishop – the one of Jerusalem, the one of Rome, or the one of ‘New Rome’ – was not simply a historical accident, reflecting ‘pragmatic’ requirements. A united witness of the universal episcopate of the Church is not simply a pragmatic necessity, but a sign that the Holy Spirit did not abandon the Church, which remains eternally as the ‘column and foundation of Truth.’ The apostles and, after them, all the disciples of Christ, were sent into the world to be Christ’s *witnesses*: the unity and coherence of that witness, the service to the world, which it implies, the common action which it requires, can be assured only if the episcopate remains *one*. The function of the ‘first bishop’ is *to serve* that unity on the world scale, just as the function of a regional primate is to be the agent of unity on a regional scale.

However, none of these forms of primacy is a primacy ‘over the Eucharist,’ and, therefore, no primate has *power over* the other bishops; he is one of them, sacramentally equal to them, fallible as they are. They have the right and the duty to oppose him when he

is wrong, and this very opposition is a service rendered to him, for his errors can lead not only to his personal catastrophe, but also to the catastrophe of his church, as well. Truth is no one's monopoly, but every Christian, and indeed every bishop, is called to manifest it in the various capacities, or ministries, which exist in the Church of God. There is no ultimate guarantee, no ultimate security. The search for guarantees and securities has lead the entire Christian West to the tragic dead end, which is apparent today in a form clearer than ever. But we, Orthodox, still do recognize that there is a special ministry, a special *diakonia* of universal primacy and that such a *diakonia* implies a particular divine *charisma*. Our problem with Roman Catholicism is that we disagree with the immovability, the infallibility of the Roman idea of primacy and, therefore, with the very particular, and indeed disastrous way, in which the Christian West later interpreted the exercise of primacy, by such men as St. Leo, St. Martin, St. Gregory the Great, and other great Roman bishops. And we believe that the *charisma* was indeed transferred to Constantinople.

However, during the entire medieval period, most Byzantine churchmen considered that, in case of Church union with the West on the basis of the Orthodox faith, the Orthodox bishops of Rome would recover their primacy. So, again, they did not consider universal primacy as being attached to a particular place, but saw it as a *diakonia*, necessary for the universal witness of the Church in the world.

### **The Ecumenical Patriarchate Yesterday and Today**

In spite of the revival of Byzantine studies in the West, which took place in this century, the idea that the Byzantine empire was, essentially, a system of caesaropapism is widely maintained by most reputable scholars and printed in widely used college textbooks.<sup>1</sup> The theory is obviously wrong: Byzantine Orthodox Christianity could not recognize the emperor as an absolute power over the Christian faith and the Christian Church simply because any such power – even held by a bishop, a patriarch, or a pope, not to speak of an emperor – was excluded by the very nature of Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy did not know 'caesaropapism,' because it was allergic to 'papism' in the first place. And so our Church venerates heroes of the faith who have opposed the heretical emperors of their day – St. Athanasios, St. John Chrysostom, St. Maximos the Confessor, St. Theodore of Stoudion and so many others – and hails martyrs who "overthrew Copronymos with the

sword of faith.” What remains true, however, is that during the entire Byzantine period, the exercise of primacy by the ecumenical patriarchate was tightly connected with the ‘symphony’ between the empire and the Church which had been formulated by Justinian and remained the basis for Byzantine political thinking until the end of Byzantium. Even the monks and fathers of the Church who challenged heretical emperors did not challenge the system itself. Patriarchs could often oppose heresies and uncanonical procedures promoted by emperors, but they were aiming at restoring the ‘symphony,’ not at destroying it. They were always taking for granted that the Christian faith itself implied the existence either of a universal empire, or, at best, of a ‘commonwealth’ of Orthodox states and peoples which recognized the emperor and patriarch of the ‘New Rome,’ as universal leaders. It is that system which led to the Christianization of Eastern Europe, transmitting to Slavs, Romanians, Georgians, and many others, not only the Orthodox faith, but also the immense wealth of Byzantine civilization – liturgy, theology, hymnography, iconography, hagiography – and made the Orthodox Church today a universal Church, and not simply the national religion of the Greek nation.

The specific role of the patriarchate in that process has become even more prominent during the last centuries of the Byzantine empire. The empire had become a negligible political entity, besieged by the Turks and limited to the city of Constantinople and its suburbs. The patriarchate meanwhile had preserved its immense administrative and canonical powers throughout Eastern Europe. Throughout most of the fourteenth century, it was lead by men who came from the monastic, hesychast background, and were zealots of universal Orthodoxy. Probably the greatest of them all, Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos, was a Thessalonican Jew, converted to Christianity; others, for example, Patriarch Joseph II, or the brilliant diplomat Metropolitan Cyprian of Kiev, or the less reputable Metropolitan Isidore, were of Bulgarian background. In the midst of most tragic political disintegration, Greek and Slavic churchmen and monks worked together – in Constantinople itself, on Mount Athos, in Trnovo, Ohrid, Pec, Moscow, and Novgorod – in a common commitment to preserve an Orthodox Christian *oikoumene*. Very interestingly, that late Byzantine period presents a striking analogy with the events happening in the West, almost a millennium earlier, when the fall of the Roman Empire provided the Roman bishop with an opportunity to assume responsibility not only for the Church, but for Society, as a whole.

It is then, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries, that the popes of Rome took over the task of imperial Rome, civilized the barbarian invaders and became the real heads of Western Christianity.

In the East, the almost total weakening of imperial power in the thirteenth - fifteenth centuries, lead to similar consequences. We have contemporary documents about ecumenical patriarchs ruling on political matters in Russia, giving birth to independent Romanian ecclesiastical provinces, and corresponding with the pagan princes of Lithuania and the Roman Catholic kings of Poland on behalf of their Orthodox subjects. All these diplomatic and administrative tasks would undoubtedly have been performed by the emperors in former times. So, when Byzantium finally fell under the Turkish onslaught, the task of becoming the *millet-bashi* – the administrative ruler of the Christian population of the empire of all nationalities – was not entirely new for the patriarch. The radical difference was only that he had to perform it now under Turkish supervision.

The peculiar situation in which the Roman pope found himself after the fall of Rome in 476, lead to his assumption of the title of 'supreme pontiff' (*pontifex maximus*) – the religious title of the Roman emperors – and to the development of his well-known claims to absolute monarchy in the Church. There is no doubt that this development happened historically when there was concrete need of impressing the Roman Christian tradition upon the barbarians in terms as absolute as possible. And the method was not equivalent to simple power-seeking: its purpose was authentically missionary and reflected very sincere convictions, especially in such great personalities as Pope St. Gregory, the Great.

It is indeed extremely interesting to discover that a similar development was taking place in Constantinople, during the late Byzantine period. The main difference was, of course, that Constantinople could not – and did not – claim any primacy of divine establishment, or of apostolic origin. However, it was indeed enhancing its authority – especially in letters to 'barbarians,' to assure the perpetuation of the 'Byzantine Commonwealth' and of Orthodox universality – in terms quite reminiscent of papal claims. Here is what Patriarch Philotheos Kokkinos writes in 1370 to Russian princes who had politically seceded from their Metropolitan Alexis (who was then also the regent of the Moscovite grand-principality):

Since God has appointed Our Humility as leader of all Christians found anywhere in the inhabited earth, as solicitor and

guardian of their souls, all of them depend on me (*πάντες εἰς ἐμὲ ἀνάκεινται*), the father and teacher of them all. If that was possible, therefore, it would have been my duty to walk everywhere on earth by the cities and countries, and to teach there the Word of God. I would have had to do so unfailingly, since this is my duty. However, since it is beyond the possibility of one weak and mightless man to walk around the entire inhabited earth, Our Humility chooses the best among men, the most eminent in virtue, establishes and ordains them as pastors, teachers, and high-priests, and sends them to the ends of the universe. One of them goes to your great country, to the multitudes which inhabit it, another reaches other areas of the earth, and still another goes elsewhere, so that each one, in the country and place which was appointed for him, enjoys territorial rights, an episcopal chair and all the rights of Our Humility.<sup>2</sup>

Such a text, if used in a Western document, should undoubtedly have to be interpreted as an extreme form of medieval papal claims. When found in the letter of a Byzantine patriarch, provision should be made for usual methods of diplomatic rhetoric. There is no doubt that Patriarch Philotheos would have readily subscribed, on ecclesiological grounds, to a condemnation of papal primacy. Another Byzantine author, Nicetas of Ancyra, who also often uses when he writes about the ecumenical patriarch such titles as "common judge," immediately qualifies his statement by the following warning:

Do not exaggerate the importance of the title of patriarch, which is given to him. For every bishop is also called 'patriarch' . . . [He then quotes St. Gregory of Nazianzos referring to his own father, a bishop, as 'patriarch'<sup>3</sup> :] and the titles of precedence are common to all of us [bishops] since all the bishops are fathers, shepherds and teachers, and it is clear that there are no special canons for metropolitans, distinct from those which apply to archbishops, or bishops. For the laying-on of hands is the same for all, and our participation in the divine liturgy is identical and all pronounce the same prayers.<sup>4</sup>

It is extraordinary to discover how precise, responsible and accurate the Byzantines were, when they theologized about issues of faith or ecclesiology, and also how free they felt when they composed diplomatic, or rhetorical documents, and acted to preserve the integrity of the Commonwealth! For it's quite clear that

Patriarch Philotheos, when writing to the Russian princes, was defining not his ecclesiological position, but his role in the framework of the universal community of nations – a late Byzantine substitute for the universal Roman empire – which he wanted to maintain against its enemies of East and West. Similarly, after the fall of Byzantium, the Ecumenical Patriarch will accept the same identification between Church and Society. Without changing anything in Orthodox ecclesiology, he will *de facto* use the civil power, with which he was vested by the Ottomans, to rule all the Eastern patriarchates from the Phanar and, even, to suppress completely the autocephalous churches of Bulgaria and Serbia.

I have tried to define earlier the *ecclesiological* framework in which the primacy of Constantinople in the Orthodox Church had been shaped and also the reasons why, in my opinion, it remains, even today, a necessity for the universal witness of Orthodoxy. However, all institutions – even those which are founded by God Himself – are *historical* phenomena and reflect the inevitable imperfections of the historical process. One cannot maintain them, unless one makes the constant effort of distinguishing the essential from the peripheral. One cannot study history, or use it for one's own benefit, without criticism – indeed, a loving and devoted criticism, if one is a Christian and if one discusses the history of the Church.

In that case of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, it is unquestionable that, between 381 and 1453, it has exercised its primacy in an *imperial* Byzantine framework, which implied an identification of the Church with a particular society, a particular civilization. As all historical frameworks, this one involved positive and negative consequences. For example, on the negative side, one can refer to the cultural rebellion against Byzantium of the non-Greek speaking Christians of the Middle-East – Egyptian Copts, Armenians, Syrians – which lead into the monophysite schism. On the positive side, one must recognize the tremendous success of Byzantium in converting, educating and civilizing the Slavic nations of Eastern Europe, which are thus indebted to Byzantium, not only for the content, but also for the forms of their Orthodox culture.

Did this entire Byzantine imperial framework disappear when Byzantium fell under the Turks? It did not. It only took different forms, and this is why the Byzantine model of Church organization and mentality continued to flourish: monasticism, spirituality,

martyrdom. Also, the medieval concept of pentarchy was maintained and even extended in the case of the establishment of the patriarchate in Russia. The Romanian scholar Nicholas Iorga was right to discover “Byzance après Byzance” in various parts of Eastern Europe, surviving until the nineteenth century.

It is only *in the past one hundred and fifty years*, that Byzantine civilization really collapsed in a most drastic, revolutionary and universal way, and was replaced with a variety of ideologies, in various combinations, which dominate our own societies today. They are all connected with the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. In the Orthodox East, their most obvious expression is nationalism, which took forms utterly incompatible with the mental and social structures of the Byzantine Middle-Ages. Basically, this nationalism can be reduced to such concepts as the ‘will of the people,’ or ‘national interest,’ considered as supreme and unquestionable values. Of course, throughout the Christian Middle Ages, there were also wars between nations and tribes, but, ideologically, medieval society was ruled by the notion of a universal Kingdom of God, reflected in a universal Christian Empire. It is that universal political ideology – and not any “national interest” which – rightly or wrongly – had received the sanction of the Church. It is also that imperial ideology, which sustained and justified the primacy of a patriarch, residing precisely in the capital of the empire, Constantinople, the “Queen of cities.”

How did the Ecumenical Patriarchate react to that revolutionary change, which involved the very *raison d'être* of its existence? To answer this question fairly, one would need volumes of historical research. Some facts are well-known, however. For example, the patriarchate rather strongly reacted against the secular national ideology which inspired the creation of the new Greek State in Greece proper. But, of course, it had no power to prevent its further progress. Actually, the internal debate about the identity of modern ‘Greece’ is still continuing among the Greeks themselves: is Greece called to continue the Byzantine traditions of the Ρωμαιωσύνη, or is to be the resurrection of a secular ‘Ελλάς? For the Greeks, the Patriarchate remains a symbol of the first option, but only a symbol, which has been long by-passed by historical realities.

But the Patriarchate was faced not only with Greek nationalism, but also with its equivalents among the other traditionally Orthodox nations. And here, one should frankly recognize that it did not succeed in riding the storm. To maintain its authority, it

became fiercely defensive, capitulating only under duress and, in its struggle for survival, gradually and unconsciously identified its own fate with that of the Greek nation. The events lead the leaders of the Phanar to forget in practice what they had themselves initially discovered at the time of the Greek Revolution, that Greek nationalism was an enemy, not a friend of the patriarchate, that it was incompatible with Constantinople's universal mission, that successors of Chrysostom, of Photios, of Philotheos Kokkinos could not identify their fate with that of a heroic, dignified and respectable, but small Balkan nation, that, in order to keep its credibility as leader of world Orthodoxy, the ecumenical patriarch had to remain *recognizable*, as Father and Teacher, by ninety-percent of Orthodox Christians, who did not speak Greek.

This recognizability was initially and for centuries, provided by the fact that Constantinople and the Byzantine Christian tradition were the guide, the matrix of world Orthodoxy, unquestionably the center and the guide in theology, art, canon law, and all other forms of Christian civilization. At that time, Constantinople was also promoting the translation and diffusion of its heritage in all languages throughout the world. Today this is not the case anymore, and the Church cannot live by simply remembering ancient symbols. So, it is inevitable that, from time to time, some voices are heard denying the primacy of Constantinople, describing the Orthodox Church simply as a federation of national autocephalous churches, or else suggesting the transfer of the primacy to places like Moscow or New York.

Dear friends, perhaps some of you think that it is improper for me, not being a Greek, to criticize Greek nationalism. But, believe me, I am ready, here and now, to anathematize other nationalisms — including particularly the Russian, and also the American — as equally abominable phenomena. By scholarly interest and vocation, I am a Romaios—or Byzantine—who firmly believes that the Orthodox Church cannot prosper today without assuming and developing what Father Florovsky called the ‘patristic mind,’ i.e., the vision of Christian truth, present in the writings of the Greek Fathers, in the traditions of Byzantine art and liturgy, in the catholic spirit of Christian Byzantium.

But it is precisely to *maintain* that tradition, to be *consistent* with it — and therefore truly faithful to its covenants — that one should prevent the Ecumenical Patriarchate from being simply strangled by the Turks in a dirty ghetto of Istanbul. It is with that in mind that I offer to your attention the following conclusions of

my paper:

1. Orthodox ecclesiology demands that the Church manifest its unity and catholicity through one bishop in each place, one Synod of Bishops, presided by a regional primate in each country (or region), and finally that, on the world scale, the witness of Orthodoxy be a reality through the unity of the world episcopate: this last unity also requires that there be a 'first bishop,' who would not be a pope with administrative powers *over* his peers, but would possess sufficient authority to organize, channel and, in a sense, represent the conciliarity of the Church. It is clear that a definition of such an Orthodox primacy is essential not only for our own internal affairs, but also for a meaningful dialogue with Roman Catholicism. In the past, we have always been strictly negative, refuting papal privileges, and we have failed — and unfortunately still fail — to project meaningful alternatives. Most of the time, we were rather simply defending ecclesiastical particularism and nationalism, whereas the issue placed by the papacy before the consciousness of all Christians is that of a world Christian witness. In the Orthodox perspective, the essential functions of the 'first bishop' consist in assuring that a constant consultation and conciliarity takes place between all Orthodox Churches, and that ecclesiastical order (*especially*, local and regional unity of all the Orthodox) be secured.

2. In substance, the above functions were precisely those of the Church of Constantinople during the Byzantine period. But since Byzantium does not exist anymore, it is simply meaningless to attempt a definition of the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Byzantine terms. Nothing can be more harmful to the prestige of the Patriarchate than to constantly invoke Canon 28 of Chalcedon, as a definition of these rights. Even a casual reader of that can see that a primacy established in the 'New Rome,' because it was the "seat of the emperor and the Senate" is irrelevant to our situation, and that there are no 'barbarian lands' in the sense in which this term was used in the fifth century. But there is indeed the need for an Orthodox primate, acting as the bishop of Rome acted in the first centuries and, indeed, as Constantinople itself functioned in the framework of the now defunct Byzantine empire.

3. The normal functioning of an Orthodox primacy in the modern world would clearly require a permanent representation of all Orthodox Churches in a consultative body around the Patriarch and, in general, an international staff. This suggestion is, of course,

not new, but it becomes increasingly relevant for reasons which should be obvious to all of us. It would, of course, be much preferable for the Patriarchate to remain in the inimitable glorious historical setting of Constantinople, but its very survival as an institution is more important than those historical considerations, and it is clear that the organization of a real world center would be much easier to realize elsewhere.

Finally, let me express my sincere hope that the present pre-conciliar activities, initiated by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and which do find sympathy and response in all Orthodox Churches, and also great (perhaps too great) expectations in the entire world — would lead to a process matching these three conclusions. It appears to me that the Patriarchate stands on a threshold and hesitates between two attitudes: the frank and fearless continuation of the conciliar initiative — which, in order to succeed, must of course become much wider, much more open and involve a greater number of competent participants — or return to fearful isolation, to an identification of its own interests with those of modern Hellenism and to a stubborn and defensive restatement of medieval titles. This last alternative would be lethal and would reinforce those who believe that the Ecumenical Patriarchate is simply a relic of the past and hope that the Turks will finally put an end to its existence. The first one, on the contrary, could revive the dormant potential of contemporary Orthodoxy, while preserving continuity with the past, consistency with the existing canonical tradition (in its essential *meaning*, if not in all its formulations) and make the Church ready to face the challenges of today.

#### NOTES

1 Cf for example Walter Ullmann, *Medieval Political Thought* (New York, 1976)

2 F Miklosich and J Müller, *Acta Patriarchatus Constantinopolitanus* 1 (Vienna, 1860), p 521

3 *Or 43 37, PG 36, 545C*

4 J Darrouzès, *Documents inédits d'ecclésiologie byzantine* (Paris, 1966), pp 222-24



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## **THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE SEEN IN THE LIGHT OF ORTHODOX ECCLESIOLOGY AND HISTORY: A RESPONSE**

Many thanks are due to Father Meyendorff for his paper on the Ecumenical Patriarchate, a paper, he states, that “does not pretend to great originality . . . [nor which is] very controversial.” Father John is being rather modest on both accounts.

The great merit of this paper, as I see it, is the great number of questions that it raises which could in themselves constitute the subject for an entire future conference of our Society. Some of the questions are excellent and need to be addressed; some are not so deserving, while others appear to be directed at the Ecumenical Patriarchate as though it *alone* were ‘guilty’ of some real or hypothetical ecclesial or theological error, when in reality, if there is any error, its target should be the *entire* Orthodox Church.

In general, it appears to me at least that Father John is ‘unhappy’ with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and although he does not explicitly state the reasons for this ‘unhappiness,’ it is perhaps due to the fact that the Ecumenical Patriarchate has failed to perform according to his expectations. Therefore, the Patriarchate itself comes under question.

Father John does not tell us *why* the “various activities which involve the preparation of an Orthodox council . . . initiated primarily by the Ecumenical Patriarchate . . . inevitably raise the issue of the exact position of that Patriarchate among the local Orthodox Churches” and *why* necessarily “The success or failure of [the Patriarchate’s] recent initiative will determine the Patriarchate’s own historical future.” I leave aside the theological implications of these assertions—I thought we Orthodox believe that God is the Lord of history—and ask whether or not Father John has confused the Ecumenical Patriarchate with a political party or government whose existence and position are dependent upon the success or failure of a given initiative or policy. Moreover, since the Orthodox Church is a ‘democratic’ church would not the success or failure of a council reflect on the entire church?

Half of Father John’s paper consists of a good survey of early Christian ecclesiology together with an understanding of ‘primacy’

with its “Western ‘apostolic’” and “Eastern ‘pragmatic’” interpretations. I believe that we can agree that the “pragmatic realities of history” did contribute greatly to the administrative structuring of the Church and to the identification and designation of certain cities and their bishops as patriarchal and metropolitan sees. We can also agree that the church of the city of Constantinople owes its patriarchal designation and rank to: 1) the founding of the city of Constantine; 2) becoming the capital of the Roman Empire; 3) remaining the residence of the Christian emperor for over a millennium; 4) being a Christian city par excellence, unlike the other patriarchal cities which contained large numbers of non-Christians; and 5) being elevated to patriarchal rank and dignity by two Ecumenical Synods.

I, too, join Father John in the desire to return to the “Nicean model” of ecclesiology and am equally distressed with and condemn: 1) “phyletism” wherever it exists; 2) the cumbersome expansive ecclesiastical provinces; 3) the institution of the “permanent synod” bequeathed to the Church by Imperial Russia; and 4) bishops who are merely clogs in a bureaucratic structure and do not exercise a pastoral function.

Beyond this I have a number of observations to make. 1) I believe it is historically inaccurate to compare in any way the evolution of and acquisition by the Roman pope of absolute authority in the West with the ‘ecumenical’ responsibility exercised by the Patriarch of Constantinople in the East. Despite the example of Patriarch Philotheos, cited by Father John, the Patriarch of Constantinople invariably exercised his authority and responsibility through a synod.

2) Had Father John consulted *all* the sources, he would not speak so casually of the suppression of the autocephalous churches of Bulgaria and Serbia (who owed their separate existance to the founding of *national* states) in the eighteenth century, but would have noted that the Patriarchate guarded their independence during the difficult centuries of Ottoman domination until their situation deteriorated so much that accepting them within the Patriarchate was seen as necessary for their preservation.

3) The Ecumenical Patriarchate not only exercised its primacy “in an *imperial* Byzantine framework . . . between 381 and 1453,” but exercised its responsibility and showed its concern in this same period and beyond for Orthodox Christians in the Muslim states as well. I believe Fr. John is too good of an historian to attribute the heresy of Monophysitism simply to a cultural rebellion

against the Empire of Constantinople.

4) One has to wonder what the reaction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the revolutionary movements and ideas of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has to do with the “internal debate about the true identity of modern ‘Greece’” which Father John has perceived.

It is true that faithful to its ecumenical outlook, the Ecumenical Patriarchate resisted nationalistic movements, even that of the Greeks. That it did not succeed in overcoming them was not due to abandoning of this principle, but because many of the faithful in leadership roles in Greece, Bulgaria, and other European lands were listening to a different Gospel. Even after the defection of the Greeks of Greece, the Church of Constantinople remained the mother of all Orthodox Christians. If it became ‘nationalistic’ for a brief period in its history, this occurred at a time in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when it was attacked for being ‘Greek’ by non-Greek politicians and prelates. To have turned away from the support of the Greek faithful of Greece and the Ottoman Empire at this time would have meant contributing to its own dismemberment and demise.

5) Although Father John claims to be a ‘Romaios,’ he has failed to note that for over a half century now the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople has exercised a ministry of service and love that extends beyond *all* national boundaries.

Despite finding itself in a “dirty ghetto of Istanbul”—perhaps Father John meant “apostolic poverty”—diminished in numbers and resources, never before in its long history has the Ecumenical Patriarchate served world Orthodoxy and Christianity in general so well without regard to any kind of ‘nationalism,’ but focused on unity, concord, order, and service. Today, as in no other time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate is truly *ecumenical*, having “nothing of this world” to protect but only exercising its responsibilities and authority, based on the sacred canons of the Church and its history of service and contributions for the benefit of all Orthodox Christians in a truly Orthodox manner.

6) As a true ‘first bishop’ the Patriarch of Constantinople is in fact now exercising, to use Father John’s phrase, “the essential functions of the ‘first bishop’ [which] consist in assuring that a continuous dialogue and true conciliarity takes place between all Orthodox Churches, and that ecclesiastical order . . . be secured.”

Constantinople’s primacy in the past may have rested on tradition but in the present it is fixed in service to Orthodoxy.



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## THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE LAW OF THE EASTERN CHURCHES

The Fourth International Congress of the Society for the Law of the Eastern Churches was held last September in Regensburg, Germany. The Society, founded in Rome in 1969, has its secretariate in Vienna. One of its main goals is to study topics of mutual concern to both Eastern Christians and Eastern-rite Catholics, recognizing their common sources of Canon Law and the vital importance of the Church's law in reckoning their differences. Members of the Society are from the Eastern Orthodox, Armenian, Coptic, Malabar and Eastern-rite Catholic Churches. This is especially significant in view of the sensitive relations which have existed for years between the Churches of the East and the Eastern-rite Churches in union with Rome.

The topic which preoccupied the congress was *The Church and the Churches: Autonomy and Autocephaly*, which is a timely subject due to its inclusion in the agenda of the future Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. An array of scholars from around the world representing the three mainstreams of Christianity addressed the topic from a historical, legal and theological point of view. Some of the questions raised included: the definition of an autonomous and of an autocephalous church; the relationship of autonomy to primacy; central authority and collegiality; the place of the local church in the Church Universal; ways of granting autocephaly, etc. The points of view expressed on these issues most often reflected the prevalent attitudes of the church from which each speaker came. The Orthodox and other Eastern Christians were especially sensitive to the need for preserving the autonomy of the local church. Roman Catholics, on the other hand, were concerned with safeguarding central authority in the Church.

There is much that could be said about the results of the discussions. For Orthodox participants, they provided a valuable opportunity to learn about the current revision of the Code of Canon Law for the Oriental Churches in union with Rome. Roman Catholics, for their part, were apprised of Orthodox attitudes regarding issues to be raised at the future Great and Holy Council. Interestingly, papers read and discussions following them cen-

tered around themes essential to both these events.

The congress ended with a paper by the eminent theologian Yves Congar. Its title (*Autonomie et pouvoir central dans l'Eglise vus par la theologie catholique*) reflects the foremost concern of both Eastern and Western Christians in reconciling the concepts of autonomy and central authority in the Church. Congar's theses left some hope for such a reconciliation:

- 1) Every local church with a bishop is *the Church* in that place.
- 2) The unity of the local churches is assured by their identical faith and sacraments, variations in non-essentials notwithstanding.
- 3) The Church of Rome has the responsibility to preserve the communion of all the local churches, each of which is personified in her.
- 4) This same church has in the past confused unity and uniformity. This is no longer the case, however, and the present time is favorable to a sound pluralism, a vitality of the local churches, and an ecclesiology of the Church understood as communion of the churches.

Congar's understanding of Rome's responsibility to preserve the communion of the local churches differs from that church's pre-Vatican II claims. It is, in fact, reminiscent of the status enjoyed by the see of Rome in the third and fourth centuries. Orthodox reaction to this position was understandably favorable. It remains to be seen, however, how ready our churches are to re-examine this vital question along these lines.

Lewis J. Patsavos  
*Holy Cross School of Theology*

#### **THE 1979 PRINCETON ACADEMIC SEMINAR ON JEWS AND JUDAISM**

The Princeton Seminar on Jews and Judaism was held at the campus of the Princeton Seminary 12-15 February 1979. Several scholars of Jewish and Christian persuasion gathered to discuss theological issues of importance to both traditions.

The session began on February 12 in the morning with a presentation by Professor Charles West from Princeton. Dr. West spoke on "Faith, Science and Technology." He stated the problem as be-



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The  
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Orthodox  
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Review



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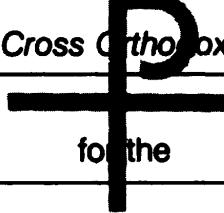
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>A Tribute</b><br><b>N.M. VAPORIS</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| <br><b>ARTICLES</b>  |           |
| <b>“In the Beginning was the Word.”</b><br><b>ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Theological and Historical Aspects of<br/>Conciliarity: Some Propositions for Discussion</b><br><b>BISHOP MAXIMOS AGHIORGOUSSIS</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Church as Cosmos: Anthropological Aspects<br/>of the Continuity of Religious Behavior</b><br><b>JOSEPH ALLEN</b>                    | <b>21</b> |
| <b>The Attitude of the Three Hierarchs<br/>Towards Knowledge and Learning</b><br><b>PERICLES VALLIANOS</b>                             | <b>43</b> |
| <b>A Note on the Theological Origins of the<br/>Iconography of the Dead Christ</b><br><b>CHRISTOPHER L. CHASE</b>                      | <b>58</b> |
| <b>St. Romanos the Melodos:<br/>Prince of Byzantine Poets</b><br><b>EVA CATAFYGIOTU TOPPING</b>  | <b>65</b> |
| <br><b>REFLECTIONS</b>   |           |
| <b>New Directions in Orthodox Ecumenism</b><br><b>STANLEY S. HARAKAS</b>   | <b>76</b> |
| <br><b>REVIEWS</b>   |           |
| <b>Constantine Cavarnos. <i>St. Athanasios of Paros</i></b><br><b>(JOHN E. REXINE)</b>   | <b>78</b> |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| P.B. Paschos. Ο ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΣ ΒΛΑΣΤΑΡΗΣ<br>ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΤΜΝΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΟΝ ΕΡΓΟΝ ΤΟΤ<br>(JOHN E. REXINE)   | 79 |
| William R. Farmer. <i>The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis</i><br>(STEPHEN GERO)   | 81 |
| Elizabeth Dawes and Norman Henry Baynes.<br><i>Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies Translated from the Greek</i><br>(STEPHEN GERO)               | 82 |
| Derwas J. Chitty. <i>The Desert a City: An Introduction to the Study of Egyptian and Palestinian Monasticism under the Christian Empire</i><br>(STEPHEN GERO) | 83 |
| T. Patrick Burke. <i>The Reluctant Vision: An Essay in the Philosophy of Religion</i><br>(GEORGE C. PAPADEMETRIOU)  | 84 |
| E.P. Panagopoulos. <i>New Smyrna: An Eighteenth Century Greek Odyssey</i><br>(WARREN B. MORRIS, JR.)  | 85 |
| Stratis Myrivilis. <i>Life in the Tomb</i><br>(COSTAS M. PROUSSIS)  | 87 |
| Kallistos Ware and Colin Davey, eds.<br><i>Anglican-Orthodox Dialogue</i><br>(VASIL T. ISTAVRIDIS)  | 88 |
| Stylianos G. Papadopoulos. ΠΑΤΡΟΛΟΓΙΑ<br>(VASIL T. ISTAVRIDIS)  | 89 |
| Vasileios T. Gioultses. ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ ΠΤΥΧΙΟΤΧΟΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΩΝ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΚΩΝ ΣΧΟΛΩΝ, 1941-1975, ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΗ ΕΡΕΤΝΑ<br>(VASIL T. ISTAVRIDIS)                             | 90 |
| Konstantinos K. Papouliades. ΟΙ ΡΩΣΟΙ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΟΛΑΤΡΑΙ ΤΟΤ ΑΓΙΟΤ ΟΡΟΤΣ<br>(VASIL T. ISTAVRIDIS)  | 90 |

## HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Professor Maximos Aghiorgoussis | 91 |
| ORDINATIONS                     | 94 |

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## ***A TRIBUTE***

*The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* is very pleased and honored to pay tribute and offer its most heartfelt congratulations to His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos on the occasion of his twentieth anniversary as Archbishop of North and South America.

Now in its twenty-fourth year, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* has published all but its first four volumes during the tenure of Archbishop Iakovos. From the very beginning he has been the *Review's* most ardent supporter and patron and he has always been ready to encourage and support its efforts to present the best possible theological and historical scholarship. Moreover, Archbishop Iakovos has been a warm patron and supporter of scholarship and learning in general. Numerous present-day scholars and publications have been beneficiaries not only of Church funds which he has made available but also of his personal contribution and assistance.

Therefore, we who are committed to theological learning join with all the others – Orthodox and non-Orthodox – to wish him *many, many years* of continued service in the Lord's Vineyard. We are also happy to say thank you for all he has done for Orthodox theology and Christian learning in general.

**N.M. Vaporis**  
**Editor**



ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS  
Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church

**“In the beginning was the Word.”**

**(John 1:1)**

At the very beginning, before the world came into being, when all was “without form and void,” the Logos, the Word, existed — life, wisdom, light and God’s creative force.

In the beginning was the Word: “all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

Within this spare and crystal-clear formulation and expression of the Christian faith, the full meaning of the Resurrection is disclosed: it is that “new creation” of which the Apostle Paul speaks when he exults: “If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has passed away, behold, the new has come.” (II Corinthians 5:17)

In turn, within that glorious proclamation we discover the full meaning of the summons when our Orthodox Church, full of love for man, calls out, “Come, receive the light.”

For “Come, receive the light” is an invitation to life. The life in Christ. To a life throbbing with immortality and timelessness. To a life as fresh and pristine as a Spring morn.

But the words, “Come, receive the light” are more than an invitation. They are a reveille call that seems to say: “The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.” (Romans 13:12)

By this interpretation of the Apostle Paul, the words “Come, receive the light” sound more like an order, a pre-battle command. For before us, from one end of the world to the other, stretches a vast front, and all along this front, formidably arrayed and superbly organized, are all the swaggering, clamoring forces that the “earthly, unspiritual, devilish wisdom” of our age can muster. (James 3:15)

Come, then, my brothers, and receive the light. Gird yourselves in its panoply. Become as light and advance fearlessly into the light. For light alone overcomes darkness. Press on toward the Risen Christ, thrusting aside whatever obstacles rationalism and doubt may interpose. Walking toward Christ you walk the way toward life. And life is the light of men. Our light. Once again hear St. John: “In him was life,” he declares, “and the life was the light of men.” Reflect for a moment on the interplay of the words: Logos, life, light. These three — the Word, life and light — are the elements that constitute man, the man of faith, and the man of the new creation.

In this second creation, which has its beginnings in the Resur-

rection, death does not exist. It is nothing more than an episode which leads into life. The man of faith does not perish. He is life and light itself, as is the eternal Logos.

Therefore, come and receive the light. Much light, abundant light, lovely and resplendent light, light that knows no sundown. See how the darkness is set to flight by the radiance of your candles. How your faces glow. How your fingers that hold them seem immaterial, not made of common flesh, as though the light emanated from within you. And behold how the joy of the Resurrection sweeps like a flood. How could disbelief withstand it? As the Prophet Isaiah cried, “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” (I Corinthians 15:55)

Our spirit, suffused with exaltation, offers up its dawn prayer and at once the angels bear it aloft on their wings. Our very countenance becomes a daybreak. And our breath, caught in a gasp of wonder before the miracle, blends with our trembling heartbeat to form a hymn of light. We exist for a moment in an aura of godlikeness. Everything is bathed in the splendor of the Resurrection, “in heaven and on earth and under the earth.” O, if only this holy moment of the Resurrection might never end; if only faithlessness and error would retreat into the darkness which is their haunt.

My brothers, this never-waning light is not merely to be viewed, but to be lived. Observe this throng of people at this midnight hour, come together in the heart of the dark night to slake their thirst for light, for truth. The truth within the miracle.

Common logic would deem it madness for us to attack darkness, indeed in its most impenetrable form, with only light as a weapon. But we here this night stand above logic. And in spiritual awe we perform a holy rite, an act of faith, as we raise our tapers, banners against the night sky; as we join voices and sing out our faith in Christ, in life, in light, in a new creation, in Easter, in the miracle.

My brothers, live this great and splendid and gladsome moment, this moment of Resurrection. Let it lift up both mind and soul. Taste of the newness of life. “Partake of the Body of Christ, taste of the spring of immortality.” And sing “Hallelujah!” to the Risen Christ. This is your hour, the hour of Orthodoxy, of true faith and of boundless spiritual gladness and rejoicing.

With Resurrection joy and love,

*Archbishop Iakovos*

Pascha 1979



## **HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

### **PROFESSOR MAXIMOS AGHIORGOUSSIS**

On 18 June 1978, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Maximos Aghiorgoussis, professor of Systematic Theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, was elected Bishop of Dikleia by the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Later, with the restructuring of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, Bishop Maximos was elected bishop of the Pittsburgh Diocese. On 29 April 1979, he was enthroned at St. Nicholas Cathedral, Pittsburgh, by his Eminence Archbishop Iakovos and other bishops of the Church.

On that occasion Bishop Maximos said the following.

Your Eminence Archbishop Iakovos,  
Your Graces, my fellow Bishops,  
Reverend Clergy,  
Distinguished guests,  
Brothers and sisters in Christ,

It is with a grateful heart that I accept the charge of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh.

I am grateful to the Mother Church of Constantinople for my election as I am thankful to His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos for his trust in me. I take this election to be the command of the Lord for me, and I am determined to do my best to answer this command.

It is most exciting to serve the Church under the new charter of our Archdiocese. Full-fledged dioceses are given bishops with responsibility, matched with full authority to serve. Our dioceses and our bishops in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese are now on their way to gaining full canonical status, according to the age-old tradition of Orthodoxy. As a consequence of their new status our dioceses are now the full manifestation of the Church of Christ in a given place. Our bishops have finally been transferred from their dioceses of the Triumphant Church in Asia Minor to contemporary dioceses of the Militant Church in the United States of America, Latin America, and Canada. Our bishops can now reflect that episcopal image described by Saint Ignatios of Antioch. He said,

"Where the Bishop is, there is Christ, and where Christ is, there is the Church and the fulness of grace."

This Church is present wherever the Eucharist can be celebrated, presided over by its canonical bishop and shepherd, without any whatsoever external dependence. This is expressed by the bishop's exclusive right to occupy his throne behind the altar, and also to have his name commemorated first. The new Charter gives our diocesan bishops this canonical status.

Let us rejoice in this event. For we have gained the values of the traditional local government, without losing what our Archdiocese has gained from a centralized administration. In this present structure the position of our bishops has been enhanced, thus enhancing even more the role of the presiding bishop. We are thankful to our charismatic leader, His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, for pursuing and achieving this restructure of our Archdiocese. With this restructure a historical event has taken place through the grace of God and the deep insight, the encouragement and the ultimate action of our venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate. The growing needs of our faithful in this land require growth in the response to these needs by our Archdiocese. This growth, the new structure allows and encourages.

The needs of the Church at a local level can be better met by the new system. Our youth needs our full attention. Programs of spiritual renewal at a local as well as a national level are a necessity. Specialized ministries to the aging, the poor and the destitute, need to be met close to home. The concern for human rights can be even more strongly expressed there where we live, in our local community. The need for greater unity between Orthodox Churches, as well as the need for ever more cooperation with every Christian Church to accomplish our common purposes, the elevation of society and the preservation of the sacredness of human life are best accomplished in the towns and neighborhoods where we live. Enormous challenges are thrusting themselves upon our times. It is my hope and prayer that these challenges will be met, with the grace of God and the good cooperation of all those involved.

Our times call for much greater team work and cooperation at all levels. At the Archdiocesan level the Synod of Bishops provides a new source of creative and constructive initiatives. At the diocesan level I am privileged to share in the loving service of my co-workers in the Lord. They are my fellow priests of this diocese,

our responsible parish councils, our dedicated ladies of the Philoptochos Societies, our enthusiastic young people, and all our faithful. I am thankful to all of them, for the enthusiastic support they have given me up to this moment. Pledges of support are offered to me each time I meet with my fellow priests, each time I visit a parish, and each time I encounter one of my co-workers. The mission of the church is to meet the needs of our people in terms of salvation in Christ, and to witness the healing and saving power of the Risen Lord in today's world. I trust in the Lord that this mission of our Church will be enhanced through the concerted efforts of all those involved, of the entire holy people of God. I have great trust that this work will be fully done within this diocese.

I pledge myself to do that which is called of me. I pledge myself fully to the work of this diocese and I will curtail those activities which keep me from the needs of my ministry here. I have given up my teaching assignment at Holy Cross School of Theology in Brookline. This was a painful decision for me. A twenty-seven year chapter of my life is now behind me. I did love my teaching assignment; I still love my students; yet, the needs of the diocese will not allow me to continue to spend the time needed for the Seminary in Brookline.

As far as my ecumenical commitments are concerned, I will continue to fulfill them until my present term of office expires.

In theological language, the canonical bond between the bishop and his diocese is compared with the bond of Christian marriage. A canonically elected and ordained bishop is committed to his diocese for life. The bishop is joined to the diocese "in health and in sickness, for better or for worse, until death does them part." In my situation, my old bride, Diokleia, has long been part of the Triumphant Church. My living bride, given to me by the Holy Mother Church, is here to stay, and will certainly survive me. To my diocese of Pittsburgh I pledge my faithfulness for life.

I feel privileged to serve this great diocese with its great people. I feel privileged to be elected to serve a diocese which will now be more fully a part of the life of this great city of Pittsburgh as well as of the other cities and states under its jurisdiction.

I pray that the Lord gives me the strength to serve this diocese as faithfully and as adequately as humanly possible. I ask for your prayers. I ask you to beseech the Lord to give me the strength to respond to His call. It is the same call that He addressed to the

bishop of Smyrna, according to the Book of Revelation; it is a call to faithfulness followed by a promise. The Lord says: "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2.10)

### ORDINATIONS:

Deacon Paul Palesty ('76) was ordained presbyter on 28 May 1978 at St. Nicholas, San Jose, Cal., by Bishop Meletios of Christianoupolis.

Deacon Theodore Pantels ('76) was ordained presbyter on 3 September 1978 at Assumption, Denver, Col., by Bishop John of Thermon.

Deacon Steven Callos ('78) was ordained presbyter on 1 October 1978 at Archangel Michael, Campbell, Ohio, by Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos.

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Frank Marangos ('79) was ordained deacon on 30 January 1979 at Holy Cross Chapel, Brookline, Mass., by Bishop Anthimos of Christoupolis.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### ARTICLES

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Theological Reflections on the Forthcoming Great Council<br>GEORGE C. PAPADEMETRIOU                                | 95  |
| Towards the Great and Holy Council<br>METROPOLITAN DAMASKINOS OF TRANOUPOLIS                                       | 99  |
| A Theological Apologia for the Forthcoming Great and<br>Holy Council<br>BISHOP MAXIMOS AGHIORGOUSSIS               | 117 |
| A Theological Apologia for the Forthcoming Great and<br>Holy Council: A Response<br>CONSTANTINE CAVARNOS           | 123 |
| A Theological Apologia for the Forthcoming Great and<br>Holy Council: A Response<br>SERAPHEIM SURRENCY             | 128 |
| Reflections on the Ethical Dimensions of the Topics of<br>the Great and Holy Synod<br>STANLEY HARAKAS              | 131 |
| Reflections on the Ethical Dimensions of the Topics of<br>the Great and Holy Synod: A Response<br>ROBERT M. HADDAD | 158 |
| Problems Concerning Autocephaly<br>BISHOP PIERRE L'HULLIER   | 165 |
| Problems Concerning Autocephaly: A Response<br>JOHN L. BOOJAMRA  | 192 |
| The Orthodox Diaspora:<br>Canonical and Ecclesiastical Perspective<br>DEMETRIOS J. CONSTANTELOS                    | 191 |
| The Orthodox Diaspora:<br>Canonical and Ecclesiastical Perspective: A Response<br>DANIEL J. SAHAS                  | 211 |

## CONTENTS – CONTRIBUTORS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| The Orthodox Diaspora:<br>Canonical and Ecclesiastical Perspective: A Response<br>BENEDICT DE SOCIO                           | 222 |
| The Ecumenical Patriarchate, Seen in the<br>Light of Orthodox Ecclesiology and History<br>JOHN MEYENDORFF                     | 226 |
| The Ecumenical Patriarchate, Seen in the Light of<br>Orthodox Ecclesiology and History: A Response<br>NOMIKOS MICHAEL VAPORIS | 244 |
| Contemporary Epistemology, Formative Theology<br>and the Forthcoming Great and Holy Council<br>JAMES STEVE COUNELIS           | 247 |
| An Address to the Third International Conference<br>of Orthodox Theologians<br>METROPOLITAN PHILIP SALIBA                     | 255 |

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The  
Greek  
Orthodox  
Theological  
Review

A Christian Orthodox/Jewish Encounter  
Lucerne, Switzerland



Volume XXIV  
Number 4  
Winter 1979

*PATRON*

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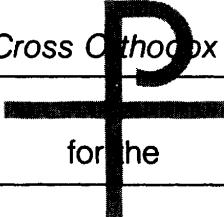
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Proceedings,  | 265 |
| Summary Minutes,  | 267 |
| Torah as a Concept and Vital Principle<br>in the Hebrew Bible<br>SHEMARYAHU TALMON.               | 271 |
| Summary Minutes   | 289 |
| A Roman Catholic View of the Law<br>RUDOLF SCHMID   | 290 |
| Summary Minutes   | 300 |
| The Law in Rabbinic Judaism<br>NACHUM L. RABINOVITCH  | 301 |
| Summary Minutes   | 307 |
| The Law in the New Testament<br>from an Orthodox Point of View<br>BASILIOS STOYIANNOS             | 309 |
| Summary Minutes   | 322 |
| Welcome Address to the<br>Christian-Orthodox and Jewish Delegates<br>WALTER GUT                   | 325 |
| <br><b>BOOK REVIEWS</b>   |     |
| Warren T. Reich (Chief Editor). <i>Encyclopedia<br/>    of Bioethics.</i><br>(STANLEY S. HARAKAS) | 328 |
| The Christian Family: A Report on Three Sources<br>(JOSEPH J. ALLEN)                              | 329 |

THE GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Constantin G. Patelos (Editor). <i>The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement.</i><br>(THOMAS E. FITZGERALD)   | 331 |
| Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (translators).<br><i>The Lenten Triodion.</i><br>(JOHN E. REXINE)   | 334 |
| Helen Bacouin (translator). <i>The Way of the Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way.</i><br>Edmund Colledge and James Walsh (translators).<br><i>The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations by Guigo II.</i><br>(JOHN E. REXINE) | 335 |
| The Fourth International Congress of the Society for the Law of the Eastern Churches<br>(LEWIS J. PATSAVOS)  | 337 |
| The 1979 Princeton Academic Seminar on Jews and Judaism<br>(GEORGE C. PAPADEMETRIOU)   | 338 |
| In Memoriam: Father Georges Florovsky<br>(THOMAS E. BIRD)  | 342 |
| <b>HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY</b><br>ORDINATIONS   | 351 |

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**A CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX / JEWISH ENCOUNTER**

Lucerne, Switzerland    16-18 March 1977

## PROCEEDINGS

On 16-18 March 1977, representatives of the Orthodox Church and of Judaism met in Lucerne, Switzerland, for academic theological discussions. The encounter took place under the auspices of the Theological Faculty of Lucerne and was co-sponsored by the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Chambésy, Geneva, and the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, which is comprised of the World Jewish Congress, the Synagogue Council of America, the American Jewish Committee, the B'nai B'rith/Anti-Defamation League, and the Jewish Committee in Israel for Interreligious Consultations. The subject was "The Law in Christian - Orthodox and Jewish Understanding."

The following persons participated in the colloquium:

On the Jewish side: Rabbi Balfour Brickner, New York; Dr. Ernst L. Ehrlich, Basle; Mr. Abraham Karlikoff, Paris; Mr. Michael J. Klein, Geneva; Dr. Pinhas Peli, Jerusalem; Rabbi Nachum Rabinovitch, London; Dr. Gerhart M. Riegner, Geneva; Rabbi Elie Sabetai, Athens; Mr. Zachariah Shuster, Paris; Professor Shemaryahu Talmon, Jerusalem.

On the Christian-Orthodox side: Mr. Georges Lemopoulos, Chambésy; Father Jean Renneteau, Paris; Professor Dr. Damaskinos Papandreou, Metropolitan of Tranoupolis; Bishop Seraphim, Zurich; Pastor Emanuel Simantirakis, Zurich; Dr. Basilios Stoyianos, Thessalonike; Professor Dr. Demetrios Theraios, Chambésy.

Regrettably, due to illness Archpriest Professor Alexei Kniazef was unable to participate and deliver a paper as planned.

On the Christian-Roman Catholic side: Professor Rudolph Erni, Lucerne; Professor Rudolph Schmid, Lucerne; and Professor Clemens Thoma, Lucerne.

For the World Council of Churches: Dr. Franz von Hammerstein.

The session was opened by Professor Dr. Victor Conzemius, Rector of the Theological Faculty of Lucerne. After the Rector's welcome, Metropolitan Damaskinos Papandreou explained that this meeting had come about as a result of a lecture he had given in Zurich in 1976 before the Swiss Society for Christian - Jewish Friendship on the theme "The Claim for Absolution of Both Christianity and Judaism and the Necessity for Dialogue between Them." His lecture had had a positive reaction from the Jewish side. Earlier, encounters of this kind had been encouraged by the resolutions of the first Presynodal Pan-Orthodox Conference in Chambésy, in November 1976, as well as by the Christmas message

from Patriarch Demetrios I. Metropolitan Damaskinos stressed the academic character of the Lucerne encounter.

Next, Dr. Riegner greeted the participants in the name of the Jewish delegation and recalled various points of contact in the history of both communities. Metropolitan Damaskinos presided over the sessions on the first day. In the morning, Professor Talmon gave the first lecture, on the theme "The Torah as a Concept and Vital Principle in the Hebrew Bible." He emphasized that Torah covers much more than ceremonial Law, being concerned with the entire spectrum of human life and moral conduct based on faith. Through misinterpretation of the Jewish concept of Law, the Jewish faith had been stigmatized and much harm had been done. Torah and Law, as understood in Judaism, preserved the connection between God and man, between man and man, between the center of society and its periphery. "Seeking God" was equated by the prophet Amos with "seeking the good and the right."

In the afternoon of the same day, Professor Schmid spoke on the subject: "A Roman Catholic View of the Law." He stressed that in light of contemporary biblical exegesis, the concept of Law had been released from the disastrously restricted interpretation of the past. He analysed the development and meaning of the purity legislation and said that, in the light of Jesus' teaching, the Law is to be seen not as an absolute, but rather as an instruction demanding a response which God's people must render anew in every age according to the revelation of God Himself. If this inner dynamic was taken seriously, the Jews and Christians, though they may not come to the same conclusions on all points, could live together in mutual respect and love.

Dr. Ehrlich presided over the meetings on 17 March, the second day of the encounter. At the morning meeting, Rabbi Rabinovitch spoke of "The Law in Rabbinic Judaism." He emphasized the flexible character of rabbinical interpretations of the Torah, which allowed for a pluralism of views within Judaism. At the afternoon meeting, Professor Stoyiannos spoke about "The Law in the New Testament from an Orthodox Point of View." He said it would be a mistake to sweep existing disagreements under the table in the name of ecumenism, and he analyzed the historic evolution of the problematic and the answers given to it, including the Christological interpretation of the Law. The Eastern Church Fathers, he recalled, were interested not so much in the problem of justification

as in the metamorphosis of man through Christ. To them, the Law was one part of the whole Scripture, a part of the mystery of Divine Economy for the salvation of man in Christ.

All the lectures gave way to lively discussions which were marked by frankness and sincerity.

On the evening of the second day, the participants were invited by Dr. Walter Gut, Director of the Department of Education of the Canton of Lucerne to an official reception in the old Town Hall.

At the last meeting, on 18 March, the discussions were summarized, and it was decided to carry on the work in a similar meeting the following year on a theme yet to be defined.

### Summary Minutes

#### *16 March 1977 – Chairman, Mgr. Damaskinos*

Professor Dr. Victor Conzemius, Rector of the Theological Faculty of Lucerne, greeted the representatives of the Orthodox Church and of Judaism in the name of the Faculty. He observed that many participants had come from overseas and other distant places. Some participants, such as Metropolitan Papandreou, were old friends and members of the faculty. He was happy that the group had honored a small university as the site of its encounter and he hoped that their choice would further the participants' readiness to dialogue and stimulate the exchange of views.

The Rector then informed the meeting that the Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Anton Hänggai, for reasons of health, was unable to welcome the group personally, and he conveyed the Bishop's greetings and best wishes for the success of the conference.

Professor Conzemius concluded with a story from the Tales of the Hassidim which he admonished all to keep in mind during the debates:

Rabbi Baer of Radoshitz at one time asked his teacher, Jacob Itzhak, the Rabbi of Lublin to show him a universal way of serving God. The Zaddik replied: "It is impossible to tell men which way they should follow. For one can serve God through study or through prayer, through eating and through fasting. Each man should consider which way his heart leads him and then he should pursue this direction with all his might."

The next speaker, Mgr. Damaskinos, welcomed the participants as a member of the Faculty. He expressed his pleasure that the Faculty, distinguished by a harmonious cooperation between Catholics and Orthodox, was to be the scene of an important academic dialogue on the Law in Orthodox Christian and Jewish understanding. This meeting owed thanks to Dr. Riegner and the the World Jewish Congress, for its organization in cooperation with the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He said it had been spurred by a lecture he had given in February 1976 at the Jewish-Christian Swiss *arbeitsgemeinschaft* in Zurich, in which he had stressed the need for Jewish and Christian common endeavor. His lecture had provoked positive comments at the Orthodox Center and had been quoted in the doctoral thesis of Miss Birgit Helwig, Berlin, on the relationship of the Orthodox Churches to Judaism. In his lecture, as quoted by Miss Helwig, he had pointed to the divergent interpretations by Jews and Christians of God and the Law in the history of Salvation and had stressed that Jesus had explicitly denied that he wanted to abrogate the Law rather than to fulfill it. A closer scrutiny of the Qumran manuscripts could also, in the future, throw light on St. Paul's intent regarding Rabbinical Law. The issue was significant in the controversy between Judaism and Christianity and had therefore been chosen as the topic of the current dialogue which was welcomed by Orthodoxy. He recalled that the first Pan-Orthodox (Pre-Synodal) Conference held in 1976 in Chambéry had formulated the wish to cooperate with other faiths with a view to eradicating fanaticism and to furthering reconciliation among men and they are reflected in the idea of Law in post-biblical literature mankind without distinction as to race or religion. The decision to cooperate with non-Christian faiths had inspired Patriarch Demetrios I's Christmas message to men of all religions, heads of states, directors of international organizations, men of spirit and culture of all trends, enjoining them to work for religious freedom and tolerance in the new year.

Mgr. Damaskinos declared that at this meeting theologians of both religions should engage in academic discussions. They should assess their own faith while being ready to listen and, if necessary, to reformulate their thinking. Understanding could not be brought about by silencing or glossing over contradictions. If basic differences were brought to light, they should become the object of a lively discussion, without polemical self-assertion nor recrimination.

Tolerance should lead to a meaningful discussion but tolerance, as Goethe had said, should be a passing thing and must change to recognition. Merely to tolerate was to offend. He quoted Gregory of Nyssa who had said that "the way is not impossible; the impossible itself can become the way towards the common Father."

Dr. Riegner said it was his pleasure to greet the Rector and the assembly in the name of the Jewish delegation. He expressed his gratitude to the Theological Faculty of Lucerne for providing the framework in which this first encounter could take place and he thanked especially the Rector and Professor Thoma for their help.

Dr. Riegner pointed out that this meeting was the first encounter between Jews and Orthodox Christians on an international level. He recited the traditional Jewish blessing *Shehecheyanu ve 'kiyemanu vehigianu*, a praise to God that it has been given to us to live to the present moment. He also noted that the encounter was part of a series of meetings which had developed during the last years into a permanent institution. He cited the Permanent Liaison Committee between the world Jewish community and the World Council of Churches and the Permanent Liaison Committee with the Catholic Church. The meeting signified the foundation of a new relationship with the Orthodox Church, which he hoped would be strengthened.

Dr. Riegner remarked that the occasion stirred emotions on both sides as they represented two of the oldest communities in the world, the Jewish people and Orthodox Christianity which, especially in the Holy Land, felt that it was pre-eminent in the origin of the Christian Church. Each community perceived itself to have come from the same geographical region and to have taken much from that region into its life, its convictions and religious thought. Their liturgies had much in common, and anyone who had participated in an Orthodox festival was reminded of Jewish rituals. Many imponderable elements were common to both Judaism and Orthodoxy and played a role both in their common and separate histories. He reminded the gathering that there also were less pleasant memories in their common history but would not dwell on those as the purpose was to overcome the problems of the past. The Jewish side was grateful that, thanks to informal conversations started with Mgr. Damaskinos, the stage of an academic encounter had been reached. He hoped that further encounters would be organized and that the personal contacts made in Lucerne would facilitate a really new relationship be-

tween Jewry and Orthodox Christianity. He hoped that the meeting and the lecturers would be blessed and that they in turn would be a blessing for both communities.

Dr. Riegner introduced the Jewish participants and Mgr. Damaskinos the Christian participants.

Next Professor Talmon spoke on the subject: "The Torah as a Concept and Vital Principle in the Hebrew Bible."

### Summary Minutes

During the ensuing discussion, the Jewish participants stressed that contrary to the Christian interpretation of salvation which assumed a breach in time before and after Jesus, Judaism considered the process of salvation a constant dynamic flow. Professor Schmid admitted that there was no cleavage between Jews and Christians which could be defined as an opposition between purity of Law and purity of heart but said that such an opposition had become evident for early Christians who had come into contact with certain Jewish trends in which the true interior practice of religion had ceded ground to exteriorized application of the commandments of the Law.

It was also agreed that new analytical tools were needed to further the understanding of Torah. No Jew could claim to represent the only correct interpretation of the Torah, though certain trends during Jewish history might be questioned as to their legitimacy. What was essential for this beginning dialogue between Jews and Orthodox Christians was that each honored and respected the other's interpretation of his religion.

*17 March 1977 – Chairman, Dr. Ehrlich*

Dr. Ehrlich introduced Rabbi Dr. Rabinovitch, Principal of Jews' College, London, who spoke on "The Law in Rabbinic Judaism."

been altered for the sake of peace, to alleviate human suffering, and for other reasons.

Rabbi Rabinovitch remarked also that there were no real boundaries between legal and philosophical thinking. The human mind was the reflection of the Creator and man made a decision on the basis of as much of the *Torah* as was given to him to comprehend.

He continued by saying that divergent views on *Halachah* could not erase the organic historic unity of the Jewish people. An outsider who wished to associate with Israel must share the historical determination and become a link in the chain which began in Sinai. According to Maimonides, however, anyone wishing to dedicate himself to God and sanctify his deeds became *kodesh kodeshim*, the holy of holies, even without identifying himself with *klal Yisrael*, the community of Israel.

A discussion on mysticism followed which led to an evaluation of the place in Judaism of Hassidism, a movement initially denounced by Orthodox Judaism, but which eventually remained very much within the Law and infused a new spirit into its interpretation.

It was said that discrepancies and differences were inevitable in the course of the Scriptures and of Jewish history, and that there was natural tension between the permanence of tradition and the changes it had to undergo in order to remain alive. No limits could be set as to the validity of any interpretation though, retrospectively, certain trends had been eliminated, such as the Frankists. The ideal of unity had always been offset by a great flexibility and contradictions had been admitted since no official exclusive line had ever prevailed. Judaism had had a pragmatic position between the centripetal norm and the centrifugal forces of history, and this made possible the maintenance of a common basis despite very many different views and trends. The total performance of all commandments would be possible only if the people lived in the land of Israel, but the Diaspora was an inherent part of Judaism. It had thus become inevitable that the *Torah* was never wholly fulfilled by all Jews everywhere.

17 March 1977—afternoon session

The Chairman, Dr. Ehrlich, invited Professor Stoyiannos to present his paper on "The Law in the New Testament from an Orthodox Point of View."

had been naturally good, and had only later been subjected to the Law. God's nearness was a "sweet torment" for man, and could thus be qualified as a holy cruelty, from which the coming of the Messiah would release him. Jews were more aware, throughout their history, of God's cruel and holy presence than other peoples, and they therefore felt the need for a redemption less than other peoples. One could thus see something complementary in the two revelations.

Professor Peli stated that the ontology of man started with Abraham who had dared argue with God about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. How did the idea of salvation fit with the ontology of man? Law was given to a community, not to an individual. Simon the Just had said that the world rests on *Torah*, on worship and on good deeds; the community rests on a system of communication between man and God and man and man. What happened to the notion of community in the New Testament? Judaism was a community not only of faith but also of fate. Although each religion had to walk in its own path and certain values could not be shared, the ontology of man, the concept of community and that of internalization of a historical experience could be shared.

Dr. Ehrlich felt that Jesus had not questioned the qualities of the Sabbath but had viewed his own powers as above those of common men: Christianity was not better ethics than Judaism but Christianity believed in the resurrection and in a change by Christ's coming. This had been brought to light by Professor Stoyiannos. Historically, Christianity had started within Judaism a family conflict and it had become a larger polemic only when it had spread to other peoples through the mission of Paul.

#### *18 March 1977 – last meeting*

After summing up the discussion, participants evaluated their experience.

Rabbi Sabetai, speaking for the Greek Jewish community, said that the work carried out during the encounter was extremely important. He suggested that the next colloquium be held in Greece, in Thessalonike or Athens.

Rabbi Brickner underlined the necessity of probing into the problems of authority and obedience – into the source of authority

for law in *Halachah*, the New Testament, Canon Law, and into the nature of that authority. Was it human, divine, or humanity inspired by divinity? Was it revelation? Religion suffered from a lack of understanding and acceptance.

Dr. Riegner noted that the discussion had highlighted the divine source of the Law and the enormous flexibility of techniques of this concept of Law, which lost its strictness and rigidity by the decentralization of its administration. Dr. Riegner supported Rabbi Sabetai's proposal, remarking that a meeting in Greece would give an opportunity to eminent theologians of that nation to express themselves and also enable theologians from neighboring countries such as Romania and Yugoslavia which had important Christian Orthodox communities to participate. He suggested that theologians from western countries with large Orthodox communities, such as the United States, be also invited.

Mgr. Damaskinos thanked all participants and especially the Theological Faculty of Lucerne for their contribution to the success of the encounter.

## REVIEWS

*Encyclopedia of Bioethics*. Chief editor Warren T. Reich. 4 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1978. \$200.00.

It is without question that the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* is a significant contribution to the field of ethics and to the interdisciplinary approach of ethics with other scholarly and scientific disciplines. The *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*, which has been ably produced by a team of scholars under the leadership of Warren Reich of the Center for Bioethics at Georgetown University, is without question, an integrating contribution to a very diverse and developing field of concern. It brings together not only the disciplines of ethics and medicine as the name implies, but it also gathers together the concerns of many areas of human scholarship, study, and experience in a remarkable achievement. Theology has its place in this encyclopedia and maintains a respectable portion of a number of entries. However, it cannot be considered a theological textbook on bioethical issues. Included are many interdisciplinary approaches, making it a compendium in the areas of bioethics, composed and presented by experts in all relevant fields, including philosophy, psychology, anthropology, sociology, religious history, genetics, medicine, social work, law, and theology.

The encyclopedia includes several sections which are, in truth, presentations in a few pages of the whole range of knowledge on the subject. Of these, I would highlight the section on abortion, aging and the aged, death, environmental issues, the discipline of ethics itself, genetic aspects of human behavior, infants, the history of medical ethics, population ethics, reproductive technologies, and an extremely valuable appendix which includes general codes for the practice of medicine, directives for human experimentation, patients' bills of rights, and codes of health care associations.

In addition to these, there are major presentations of religious traditions in medical ethics. Included among these are articles on Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Eastern Orthodoxy. From an Orthodox perspective, the publication of the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* has permitted the statement, to this writer's knowledge, for the first time of a coherent ethic of bioethics from an Eastern Orthodox perspective. The statement should form a platform of discussion within Eastern Orthodox Christianity. There is no question that the state of ethics in the Eastern Orthodox Church, especially in the United States, has had need of an effort to create a coherent body of teaching. It is not that this teaching is absent in European traditions; rather it is a fact that in the English language and in the United States in particular, there has not been a thorough-going attempt to present an Eastern Orthodox ethic in English. Whatever exists consists mainly of ethical handbooks or isolated topical writings. This article has attempted to present in a coherent way, through the extensive bibliography, a summary presentation of Eastern Orthodox attitudes towards bioethical questions. To my knowledge, such a statement does not exist elsewhere in the Orthodox world as well.

The entry on Eastern Orthodox Christianity begins with a treatment of the basic doctrine and ethical affirmation of Eastern Christianity, focusing on theological anthropology, divine energies and human self-determination, the relationship of body and spirit, the place of law, motive, and intent in ethics. It serves as a brief outline of some of the major theses in Eastern Orthodox ethical theory. Application to bioethics is discussed under two major rubrics: the protection of life and the transmission of life. Under the first, the article treats, with Eastern Orthodox approaches, health care, rights of patients, human experimentation, abortion, organ transplants, drug addiction, mental health, aging, death and dying, and euthanasia. Under the second rubric, the transmission of life, there is a discussion of human sexuality from an Eastern Orthodox perspective, fertility control, population issues, artificial insemination, genetic counseling, and genetic screening. Needless to say, the article treats these issues in a very direct fashion and provides a useful summary of Eastern Orthodox views on bioethical issues. It is a good thing that this writing has been included in the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*. In addition to that article, there is another article in the larger section on population issues and questions from an Eastern Orthodox perspective.

The usefulness of the encyclopedia for Eastern Orthodoxy is not limited to the fact that it includes two articles specifically related to the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is clear that a collection of writings such as this cannot help but stimulate ethical thinking in the Eastern Orthodox world in general. It certainly can provide an important, concise, and useful resource for the teaching of ethics in Orthodox seminaries, for the bishops and priests of the Eastern Orthodox Church as they seek to address in a knowledgeable fashion the issues of ethics as they face the parishioners and members of the Orthodox Church, as well as the fact that it provides a ready entry into the larger interdisciplinary discussions on issues of medical ethics. No Eastern Orthodox theologian or spokesman can claim ignorance of the major issues when, in succinct form, the information is readily available in the *Encyclopedia of Bioethics*. This is an important resource which should find its way into all Eastern Orthodox Church and school libraries.

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#### **THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY: A REPORT ON THREE SOURCES**

Someone said, "There is one perfect way to raise children, and once I discover what it is, I can be a perfect parent." How true it is! After years of practicing in and studying this field, I am more and more convinced of this truth.

Given the truths of our Orthodox faith, and particularly those implied in the marriage sacrament, I offer the following thoughts on these sources which can help us *implement* those truths. A few things, however, should first be said regarding family life. While my comments on the following books reveal some of those feelings, let me also add the following:

In every home, three qualities should be maintained regarding family and interpersonal dynamics: 1) the right to ask questions and obtain an honest answer; 2) the right to a certain amount of privacy; and 3) the right to make a mistake.

Contrary to many modern theories, I believe that when parents are confronted 'in combat' with their teen-ager (e.g. regarding a clear case morality issue), it is crucial for the parent to 'win' – and I mean that decisively! However, we win not just to win, but because there are often other and deeper implications involved in every confrontation. To begin with, there's the need to see in the parent a base of security, a source of identity, a channel of transcendent morality, etc. The problem is not, after all, to gain the upper hand in power, but 'how,' with what sensitivity, and for what purpose. (Of course, it is needless to say that when the parent is wrong, there should not even be a 'combat.') I believe that there is nothing more destructive than for the parent to disintegrate during these clear-cut struggles. The child does not *need* that! Our parental task, as I see it, is to help shape the *will* of the child, without destroying the *spirit* to struggle.

This all has to do with the part we can play in the child's self-esteem, and when we are 'winning,' we must remember that that seemingly 'childish irresponsibility' or 'willful defiance' may not be that at all. Rather, it may be the cry of a wounded spirit lacking a positive self-image. Thus, we must be careful when we 'win,' that is, when we establish our parental responsibility!

Finally, before reading the following brief reviews, I would like to put a plug in for parental attitude and perspective. How different parenting can be, if we can make a conscious effort to have fun with our kids, to enjoy them, and to engender a sense of humor. If that can be our attitude, parenting just may be more of a joy than a burden.

With these thoughts, I would heartily recommend the following three sources.

*You Can Have a Happier Family.* By Norm Wakefield. Glendale, California: Regal, 1977. Pp. 143. Paper \$2.95.

The author identifies in nine chapters four basic family goals for Christian parents:

- 1) To develop attitudes of consistency and self-discipline;
- 2) To develop an atmosphere of love and unity;
- 3) To provide opportunities to grow, discover and create; and
- 4) To discover and work toward God's will and purpose for our family.

Chapters Two and Three on discipline are superb. Wakefield defines discipline as "guiding, supervising, and educating a child's choices." He also says, "The quality of my relationship to my child is more important than that particular mode of discipline I choose to use."

*How Not to Raise Cain.* By Pat Holt and Sandy Rau. Wheaton, Illinois: Victor, 1978. Pp. 96. Paper \$1.50.

The strength of this book is its strong scriptural basis. These authors, who have given Christian response over the years in a newspaper question-answer column, include some of those very answers in this book. Regarding the scripture, they give a verse and then apply it in a practical manner; this is an ideal pastoral approach. The only difficulty is one of 'reduction' in which some of the implications and problems of applying that scripture are too easily by-passed.

I do like the emphasis on helping a child build self-confidence, i.e. some practical principles and steps. Their discussion of discipline is less than 'whole,' however, inasmuch as it is viewed only as punishment, rather than guidance (discipline – disciple). 'Spanking' is good "because it is biblical." I see discipline in its educative form, rather than its punitive form.

*For Families Only: Answering the Tough Questions Parents Ask.* Edited by J. Allan Peterson. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale, 1977. Pp. 320. Paper \$4.95.

Here are fifty-one contributions which deal with a multitude of questions from T.V. to sex education. I like these articles for parents because they are brief but informative. The question is quickly given and the answer is a practical one. Someone who is looking for one such 'handbook' will be very pleased with what this book has to offer. Not only parents, but teens will also get much from this source.

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*The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement.* Edited by Constantin G. Patelos. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1978. Pp. 360. Paper \$14.95.

*The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement* is a documentary history covering the period from 1902 to 1975. Edited by Constantin Patelos, an Orthodox member of the WCC staff, the anthology contains nearly fifty documents which express the witness and involvement of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement in general and the WCC in particular. As

the editor states: "The documents collected in this book help us to see how the Orthodox Church reads and interprets the ecumenical movement as the most outstanding current in contemporary Church history."

This book is well organized into four sections. The first contains the encyclicals of the Patriarchates on the ecumenical movement. The encyclicals from Constantinople of 1902, 1920, 1952, and its Declaration of 1973 are published together with the Message of Patriarch Pimon of Moscow of 1973. Selected replies to these documents are also included. Because they express the formal position of the Orthodox Church, the encyclicals are perhaps the most important documents in this collection. It should also be noted that this is the first time that the famous encyclical of Patriarch Joachim III in 1902 and its subsequent response of 1904 have been fully translated into English. This historic letter called for Christian reconciliation and charitable cooperation long before any organized movement toward Christian unity had begun.

The second section is devoted to the brief reports issued by the first Pan-Orthodox Conference at Rhodes in 1964 and the fourth held at Chambesy in 1968. The former report dealt with the plans for the Great and Holy Synod while the second discussed Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement, especially the WCC.

Formal Orthodox statements made in connection with Conferences and Consultations of the WCC are contained in the third section. The editor has collected the Orthodox statements given at Lausanne in 1927, Edinburgh in 1937, Lund in 1952, Evanston in 1954, and New Delhi in 1961. The reports of Orthodox Conferences held under WCC auspices in Holland in 1972, Roumania in 1974, and Crete in 1975 are also included. It should be noted that the Orthodox statement presented to the first meeting of the WCC in Amsterdam in 1948 is included in the fourth section.

The final section of *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement* contains statements, sermons, and formal papers delivered by Orthodox theologians on various theological themes and ecumenical concerns. Included are the works of both clerics and lay theologians representing the various traditions within Orthodoxy. These twenty-three documents express the thoughts and convictions of some of the most prominent Orthodox theologians of this century. While the majority of these documents were taken from WCC reports or from its *Ecumenical Review*, many are of very high theological quality and certainly deserve to be read by a wider audience.

Without seeking to detract from the importance of this volume, the following should be noted with regard to its content. This text is not a complete collection of all the significant documents reflecting the participation of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement. Thus, the title of the volume is somewhat misleading. With the exception of the Patriarchal Encyclicals, all the documents relate in one way or another to the role of Orthodoxy in the WCC. The book does not contain any documentation of the recent Oriental Orthodox-Eastern Orthodox dialogues, Anglican-Orthodox dialogues or

Old Catholic-Orthodox dialogues. Nor is there any reference to the rapprochement between the Church of Rome and the Church of Constanti-nople. Hopefully, another volume will one day document these aspects of Orthodoxy's involvement in the quest for Christian unity.

However, the importance of the present work cannot be underestimated. First, the documents clearly demonstrate the important role which the Orthodox Church has played and the valuable witness it has given in the development of the ecumenical movement in general and the WCC in particular. With the Patriarchal Encyclical of 1902 and through participation in the Stockholm Conference of 1925, Orthodoxy was a pioneer in the contemporary quest for Christian unity. Through theological dialogue and common studies, Orthodoxy has contributed much to the process of reconciliation. Although the degree and quality of Orthodox witness have developed over the years, these documents show that the commitment of Orthodoxy to the cause of Christian unity is strong and firm. At our recent conference at New Valamo it was stated that: "The participation of the Orthodox in the ecumenical movement of today is not, in principle, a revolution in the history of Orthodoxy but it is a natural consequence of the constant prayer of the Church 'for the union of all.' It constitutes another attempt, like those made in the patristic period, to apply the apostolic faith to new historical situations and existential demands."

Secondly, these documents will help the reader better appreciate the stance of the Orthodox Church within the WCC. Clearly, Orthodoxy is committed to the reconciliation and unity of all Christians. However, at no point has Orthodoxy compromised the historic faith or diminished its fullness. The Orthodox Church has never accepted 'denominationalism' as the norm of Christianity. She continues to bear witness to the reality of the one Church founded upon the apostolic faith and celebrated in the Eucharist. As the New Delhi statement says: "The Orthodox Church by her inner conviction and consciousness, has a special and exceptional position in the divided Christendom, as the bearer of, and the witness to, the tradition of the ancient undivided Church, from which all existing denominations stem by way of reduction and separation." The documents in this volume demonstrate that Orthodoxy does not view theological reductionism and relativism as the means of achieving Christian unity.

Finally, these documents will undoubtedly assist the non-Orthodox reader in gaining a deeper appreciation for the rich spirituality and theology of the Orthodox Church. At a time when Christianity is so frequently identified only with its western expression, books such as this one are greatly needed to correct such a false picture. Moreover, the witness of Orthodoxy is especially significant now when the WCC appears to be drifting toward a form of secular ecumenism, void of sound theological foundations.

Dr. Constantin Patelos, the editor of this volume, and the General Secretariate of the WCC which took the initiative in publishing this valuable work

are to be commended. *The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement* is destined to become a standard reference work not only in the area of ecumenical relations and symbolics but also in the broader area of contemporary ecclesiastical history.

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*The Lenten Triodion.* Translated from the original Greek by Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware. London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1978. Pp. 699. \$28.00.

It is most appropriate that *The Lenten Triodion: The Service Books of the Orthodox Church* should follow the publication of the translators' *The Festal Menaion* (1969) at this particular time. The same principles used in the earlier volume have also been followed here. Texts for the ten Sundays before Easter are given *in toto*, along with the complete services for the first week of Lent, for Holy Week, and for certain other days. Designed for liturgical use, this translation, which has utilized the Greek *Triodion Katanyktikon* of the Apostolike Diakonia (Athens, 1960), the official publishing house of the Church of Greece, is suitable for singing and reading aloud. Note is taken of variations from Slavonic use. A substantial part of this material has never previously been available in English. Because so much of the theology of the Eastern Orthodox Church is expressed through its prayer services, this volume, along with *The Festal Menaion*, is vital for a proper understanding of the nature and function of the services of the Orthodox Church. In *Lenten Triodion* we can follow the story of the creation of man, his exile and return to paradise through repentance, while by following Christ day by day from Palm Sunday to Easter Eve we can witness how man is reconciled to God through the sufferings and death of the incarnate God Himself.

In his introduction Archimandrite Kallistos Timothy Ware, who is Spaulding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Studies at Oxford, has given us a splendid and substantial essay on history and inner meaning of the Great Fast of Lent, the historical development, the Great Fast, the rules of fasting, and on the contents and inner unity of the Triodion. There is also a valuable section on the structure of the Lenten offices.

Mother Mary of the Orthodox Monastery of the Veil of Bussy-en-Othe, France and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware have performed an immense service by providing us with a highly competent, highly usable, and highly literate translation of about two-thirds of the total content of the Triodion of the Orthodox Church. Those professing an interest in the Orthodox Church should have this and its companion volume, *The Festal Menaion*, in their library. Both are basic texts.

John E. Rexine

*The Way of a Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way.* A new translation by Helen Bacovcin. Foreword by Walter J. Ciszek, S.J. Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1978. Pp. 196. Paper, \$2.45.

*The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations by Guigo II.* Translated, with Introduction by Edmund Colledge, O.S.A. and James Walsh, S.J. Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1978. Pp. 157. Paper, \$2.45.

These two books on Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic monasticism form an interesting source of comparison and contrast for the ever larger number of readers who are increasingly interested in the Christian tradition of spirituality. *The Way of a Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way*, by an anonymous handicapped lay Russian Orthodox Christian peasant of the nineteenth century has long been an Orthodox spiritual classic that has been translated into many languages, while *The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations* by a clearly identifiable twelfth century Carthusian monk who was Prior at the Grande Chartreuse in France, appears in modern English translation for the first time, together with a detailed critical introduction and commentary. The Orthodox spiritual classic is aimed at individual spiritual development for all Christians; the Roman Catholic Guigo, reflecting medieval Western monasticism in the tradition of Augustine, Bernard, Anselm, and Bonaventure, says that his *Ladder of Monks*, subtitled "A Letter on the Contemplative Life," is made up of his "thoughts on the spiritual exercises proper to cloistered monks."

*The Way of a Pilgrim and The Pilgrim Continues His Way*, in Helen Bacovcin's eminently readable translation that beautifully glides along, centers on the power of prayer, specifically the Jesus Prayer, "a power which reaches far beyond the intellect and human knowledge and beyond all efforts of man seeking to find meaning in life," according to Walter J. Ciszek in his Foreword. The translator emphasizes that "The Pilgrim is deeply in love with his God and never tires of communicating with Him. Through his constant communion with his Lord and Master he gains much wisdom and understanding; he learns that true riches are of the spirit and are accessible to all. He knows as few of us do that a whole hearted response to the message of the Gospel is the only one that makes sense and satisfies the very core of our being" (p. 8). The account is the account of a wandering suffering human being who has lost all his material possessions and his family but not his faith nor his God, and who believes that "prayer is the essence of Christian life," "the most important and necessary means of salvation and the first responsibility of every Christian" (p. 131). Constancy of prayer is what our unidentified author stresses, for "Prayer is so dynamic and powerful that you can pray and do what you wish and prayer will bring you to the right and just action" (p. 156). The Pilgrim, in this simply expressed, but profoundly moving journey into the realm of the spirit, shows the reader how to pray constantly and shares with that reader the ultimate happiness of the intense search which ends in his union with his God.

Guigo's works, though briefer, are, in a sense, more scholastically colored. For him the analogy of the ladder (already available in Genesis, St. John, and Origen), prescribed the three upward grades or steps of purgation for beginners, illumination for proficients, and unitive prayer for the perfect. There are also four ascending steps that he describes as "reading," "meditation," "prayer," and "contemplation." These are respectively defined as "the careful study of the Scriptures, concentrating all one's powers on it"; "the busy application of the mind to seek with the help of one's own reason for knowledge of hidden truth"; "the heart's devoted turning to God to drive away evil and obtain what is good"; and "when the mind is in some sort lifted up to God and held above itself, so that it tastes the joys of everlasting sweetness" (p. 82). Ultimately, through the Cross, Christ must be followed and clung to in love for the believer "to be made one with Him for all eternity" (p. 137).

Without a doubt the translators of Guigo II, who in 1970 had published the parallel Latin and French text in *Sources Chretiennes*, have rendered an important service to students of medieval monasticism by their meticulous English translation of *Scala claustralium* and *Meditationes*, but also have provided an exhaustive introduction that tells us what is known about Guigo's life and writings, the temper of Western medieval monasticism, and the manuscript sources used.

Both works deal with the "interior life" and clearly reflect two different approaches aspiring to the same goal. Both works show the influence of their respective Church Fathers. *The Way of a Pilgrim* even contains relevant passages on prayers from St. Simeon the New Theologian, St. Gregory of Sinai, Nicephorus the Solitary, Callistus and Ignatius, Hesychius of Jerusalem, Philotheus of Sinai, Theoleptus, Metropolitan of Philadelphia, Barsanuphius and John, and Abba Philemon. The translators of Guigo II carefully provide notes on all their author's Patristic and Scriptural sources.

Interestingly, the Latin Guigo II may be guardedly described as more prescriptive, more formal, more legalistic, more precise, more dogmatic; the Orthodox Pilgrim as more intimate, more conversational, more human, more personal. Each reflects its own tradition in its own way. Both aim to guide the individual through a contemplative life to constant communion with God.

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*Colgate University*

## **HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

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**Deacon Michael Petrides ('79)** was ordained presbyter on 23 April 1979 at the Holy Trinity Church in Steubenville, Ohio, by Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh.

**Sub-deacon Timothy Ferguson ('81)** was ordained deacon on 29 April 1979 at St. George, West Roxbury, Mass., and presbyter on 2 December 1979 at St. John of Damascus, Boston, Mass., by His Eminence Metropolitan Philip, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.

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**Dr. Warren B. Morris, Jr. ('81)** was ordained sub-deacon on 29 April 1979 at St. George, West Roxbury, Mass., by His Eminence Metropolitan Philip, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, and was ordained deacon (assumed the name John) on 1 July 1979 at St. George, Norwood, Mass., by His Eminence Archbishop Michael, Auxiliary of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese.

**Deacon Paul (Desmond) O'Callaghan ('80)** was ordained presbyter on 22 May 1979 at St. George Cathedral, Worcester, Mass., by His Eminence Metropolitan Philip, Primate of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese.

**Thomas E. Fitzgerald ('74)** was ordained deacon on 27 May 1979 at the Haghia Triada Church, Thessalonike, Greece, by Metropolitan Panteleimon (Rodopoulos) of Tyrolo and Serention.

**Christopher Metropulos ('80)** was ordained deacon on 14 September 1979 at the Holy Cross Chapel, Brookline, Mass., by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

Panagiotis Giannakopoulos ('75) was ordained deacon on 16 September 1979 at the Holy Cross Chapel, Brookline, Mass., by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

John Kaloudis ('79) was ordained deacon on 22 September 1979 and presbyter on 23 September 1979 at the Holy Trinity Church, Wilmington, Del., by Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos.

Milton Gianulis ('80) was ordained deacon on 7 October 1979 at the Annunciation Church, Lancaster, Pa., by Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh.

Costas Kostaris ('79) was ordained deacon on 6 October 1979 and presbyter on 7 October 1979 at the Annunciation Church, Lancaster, Pa., by Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh.

Mark Arey ('79) was ordained deacon on 27 October 1979 and presbyter on 28 October 1979 at the Annunciation Cathedral, Baltimore, Md., by Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos.

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Spyridon Kehayes ('79) was ordained deacon on 3 November 1979 at the St. Nicholas Church, Detroit, Mich., by Bishop Timothy of Detroit, and presbyter on 25 November 1979 at the Holy Trinity Church, Bridgeport, Conn., by His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

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Gerasimos Michaleas ('76) was ordained deacon on 16 December 1979 at the Holy Cross Chapel, Brookline, Mass., by Bishop Anthimos of Boston.

Louis Christopoulos ('80) was ordained deacon on 6 January 1980 at SS. Constantine and Helen Church, Cheyenne, Wy., by Bishop Gerasimos of Abydos.

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*NACHUM L. RABINOVITCH*

## **THE LAW IN RABBINIC JUDAISM.**

The subject which I am to discuss this evening is “The *Torah* as seen in Rabbinic Judaism,” and of course, in fact, we have already seen a good deal of this subject during yesterday’s discussions. I need not, I believe, after yesterday’s deliberations, point out that I will not limit myself to a particular historical period, although I shall try to cite from the Talmudic rabbis. Nonetheless, the presentation is one of current validity. In connection with some of the discussions yesterday, I should like to point out that the role of *Torah* in rabbinic Judaism is a substantive rather than an instrumental one only. Now that is not to deny the functional character of the Law, which is both regulative and prescriptive, governing the relations between individuals and groups comprising society, and generally controlling the various elements of the social fabric as well as creating special structures of society and imposing obligations, duties, and patterns of behavior on individuals and various collectives. I suppose one ought to emphasize at this point that this is really the major content of the Law, although, of course, there are commandments which deal primarily and even exclusively with the relations between the individual and the Almighty. Nonetheless, in Judaism we do not distinguish between these and between the laws that govern the relations among individuals and those of the individual and society and among the various groups that comprise the community as a whole.

In fact, so significant is this regulative aspect of the Law, that we find that the Talmudic sages put into the mouth of the Almighty, so to speak, a remark which was mentioned here yesterday. It is a comment on a passage in *Yirmiyahu*, “They have forsaken Me and have not kept my *Torah*” (Jeremiah 16.11). “וְאַתָּה יְהוָה צְדָקָה שָׁמְרוּ.” The rabbis say that the implication is “Would that they had forsaken me and kept my *Torah*, for the leaven in it would bring them back to the good.”<sup>1</sup> There are, in fact, two readings. According to one reading, it is the leaven, *seor* שְׂאָר ; another reading is *maor* מָאָר , light. In any case, the assumption was that a society which conducted its affairs in

accordance with *Torah* would, in the course of its normal development, surely reach the stage where it would discover God. A society in which the Law is taken seriously is a society in ferment: the dynamism which animates it impels a search for the ultimate ground of obligation and the source of being itself.

Yet these functions do not exhaust the nature of *Torah*. In their characteristically epigrammatic fashion, the rabbis state in the *Mishnah Peah*,<sup>2</sup> **אלו דברים שאדם אוכל פירותיהם בעולם הבא.** “These are the things of the fruits of which one eats in this world and the stock endures for the world to come: honoring father, mother, doing kindness, making peace between man and his fellow, and the study of *Torah* which equals them all.” Thus the study of *Torah* is of supreme value, independent of its instrumentality in the fulfillment of the highest ethical imperatives it formulates. The Law is much more than a catalogue of Israel’s obligations under the Covenant. It is itself the embodiment of the Covenant, **ספר הברית** and the study of *Torah* not only leads to the awareness and the knowledge of the *mitzvot* and the commandments which one is obligated to perform, but the study of the Law is thus an act of subscription to the Covenant.

Thus we have added a novel species to the universally recognized modes of worship in which man approaches his Maker either in supplication or in gratefulness, but always as a creature *vis-à-vis* his creator in an attitude of dependency. The study of *Torah* is radically different, for it is an encounter of the two parties to the Covenant. Such is the dignity of man who not only walks in the way of God, following God so to speak, but he is able to walk “with God.” We find that scripture speaks of the first Covenant with Noah, and Noah is described as walking “with God” (Genesis 6.9). Moreover, Abraham Avinu was told “walk before me and become whole” (Genesis 17.1). The Covenant of Abraham enabled him to walk autonomously “before God.” When men study *Torah*, God himself listens, as it is written **וישמע בְּהָ' וַיִּשְׁבַּ** “The Lord hearkened and heard, and it was written in a book of remembrance before him.”<sup>3</sup>

Yet this, too, does not exhaust the nature of *Torah*. The rabbis were very wary of ascribing any attributes to God. Nonetheless, central to our conception is the idea of the voluntarist Deity. For the biblical doctrine of man as the image of God was understood to mean that man is endowed with the freedom of will. It is only

insofar as man possesses moral freedom that he reflects something of his Maker. To the image which is man, man the only free agent in the world, corresponds the original – the Creator – who, by an exercise of free will, chose to bring the universe into being.

The will of God is conceived of as operating on two levels. On the one hand there is the Active or Creative Will which brought being out of non-being and light out of darkness

**ברוך שאמך ויהי השולם.** “Praised be He who spoke and the world became,”<sup>4</sup> for by His willing alone all things were made, and this Will sustains them. The Active Will relates to the universe in its transcendence, for it is beyond material existence.

On the other hand, the Normative Divine Will is a challenge and an imperative. It creates norms and the ground of obligation but does not compel realization nor even only assent. The Normative Will is immanent in the world. It is the aspect of Divine that waits upon man: in the world of Solomon’s Song

**פָּתָחֵי לִי אֲחֹתִי רַעִיתִי** “Open for me, my sister-bride” (Canticles 5.9). It is in his immanence that man can meet God, for God addresses man and man is aware of being commanded. Whenever man stops to listen, the Divine Presence is there waiting:

**הַנֶּה זֶה עָמֶד אַחֲרֵכֶת לְנוּ** “Behold, He stands behind our wall, looking through the window, peering through the lattice” (Canticles 2.9).

The Divine Imperative speaks to every generation in the *Torah*. To open one’s mind to *Torah* is to open one’s heart to God, for the *Torah* is of God, as it is written,

**וְהִי הַדְּבָרִים הַאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר אַנְכִּי מְצֻוָּה הַיּוֹם** “These words which I command you THIS day” (Deuteronomy 6.6); say the rabbis, “Do not think of them as an old ordinance . . . but as a new one to which everyone hastens.”<sup>5</sup> Moreover, we have been taught, “The Holy One, blessed be He, has nothing in this world beyond the four ells of *Halachah*.<sup>6</sup> Although the whole world is His – He made it – yet He has handed it over to His creatures, and He gave dominion to man, so that now man alone can provide a domain where God’s presence can be admitted into the world. Where the *Torah* is diligently studied and observed – the four ells of the *Halachah* – there is the indwelling of the Divine. By giving us the *Torah*, He made Himself a dwelling place on earth.

The rabbis<sup>7</sup> point to a remarkable paradox. It is written in the Psalms (1.2)

**אֲשֶׁרִי הָאִישׁ . . . בְּתֹרְחָה הִ חְפֹצֶוּ וּבְתֹרְחָתוֹ יִהְגֶּה יְוָמָם וְלִילָה** “Blessed is the man who desires God’s

*Torah – Torat Hashem*,” and then the Scripture continues, “He

meditates on his *Torah* day and night." First it is described as God's *Torah*, and then it is spoken of as *his—man's Torah*. Although the *Torah* is divine, man can appropriate it and make it his own. This is not just a mere act of acquisition, as when one acquires a ready-made object and becomes its legal owner in a technical sense, for such ownership is, after all, only extrinsic and is not to be compared with the more fundamental kind of ownership of the maker of an object. When man studies *Torah* diligently and sincerely, he becomes also a creator of *Torah*, and the *Torah* he creates reflects his human nature.

Perhaps this can best be understood in terms of a remarkable statement in the *Mishnah* in Sanhedrin,<sup>8</sup> in which the rabbis describe the nature of man. The first part of this *Mishnah* is very widely quoted and very well-known. But the second and the more profound part, I believe, is hardly ever cited. The *Mishnah* is concerned with the procedure in the case of witnesses testifying in a capital case. They are to be instructed as to the gravity of their responsibility, and in this connection with the nature of man, the preciousness of man, is described to them, since the life of the accused is virtually in their hands. The rabbis ask why is it that the human race was created to be descended from one human pair alone? They suggest a two-fold reason for this. The first is to promote harmony among men, so that no one should be able to say to another, "My progenitor was greater than yours." But there is also another purpose. The *Mishnah* continues

**לְהַגִּיד גָּדוֹלָה הוּא שֶׁל הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא**

"To tell the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He. For a man casts many coins from a single die and they are all alike; but the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, produced every human being from the original first man, and no one is like his fellow." Moreover, the rabbis say, "Just as their faces are unlike, so are their minds unlike."<sup>9</sup> All men share a common origin, and therefore a common dignity. Yet every man is a particular and unique facet of the Divine. This is what the *Mishnah* says: "To tell the greatness of the Holy One, blessed be He." It is the distinctiveness of every individual that is the unmistakable stamp of his creator. The greatness of God is revealed in the uniqueness of every single man.

Usually these individual differences result in different conceptions and divergent understandings. No two minds produce the same *Torah*. And so we find that from the earliest times right up to our own time, on different questions that arise in connection

with what is the Law, and the requirements for this situation or that situation, one finds that one Sage permits while another forbids and yet, say the rabbis in the Talmud . . .

אָלֹו וְאָלֹו

"Both these and these are the words of the living God."<sup>10</sup> Thus while the Law is comprehensive and all-embracing, it is also very specific. While the Law is eternal and Divine, it is also very human and highly subjective. The *Torah* is God's blueprint for man, and it is also man's conceptualization of God's world.

In the legal contracts of the Law, the man who meditates on *Torah* realizes his own characteristic pattern of the universe. "There is nothing that is not alluded to in the *Torah*." Indeed man finds his place in the universe not merely as a creature or an object, but rather as a creator or a subject in his own right, by virtue of his labor in *Torah*.

It is true, of course, that the exigencies of society and state and community demand that, in those aspects of the Law that apply in the public domain, there be procedures to assure a certain degree of relative uniformity and continuity. Otherwise, the result would be extreme fragmentation, which could end in the break-down of the community. Nonetheless, it is interesting that certainly since the dissolution of the central authority at the close of the Talmudic period, there have not been hard and fast binding procedures for effective universal decisions, even in those areas that require a degree of uniformity and continuity. This does not mean that such a degree of coherent practice has not been attained.

On the contrary, certainly until very recent times our historic experience has testified to the fact that through the application of rather ill-defined — purposely, intentionally ill-defined — procedures, it has nonetheless been possible to attain in practice a considerable measure of common agreement. The reason is that the importance of the study of *Torah* is such a fundamental value that the moral authority of the great teachers of *Torah* has been voluntarily accepted wherever similar questions arose for decision. This allowed, on the one hand, a degree of uniformity and, on the other hand, various individual communities have retained differing practices and, on some questions, even individuals have retained differing practices, all in the awareness that both these and these are the words of the living God.

The universe, though time and space-bound, points beyond itself to "the everlasting arms beneath" (Deuteronomy 33.27). The *Torah*, though framed in the temporal language of transient man,

is alive with infinite meaning of the breath of the eternal God. Every single soul has its own shade of meaning in *Torah*, and that particular meaning expresses the very essence of that soul.

There is an intriguing conclusion to the passage that I quoted from the *Mishnah* Sanhedrin which speaks of the variety of individual man as manifesting God's greatness. We read: "Therefore," that is, because it is God's greatness to have made every man different, "Therefore every man is obligated to say **בשבילי נברא העולם** "For my sake was the world created." Every man must always act in the awareness that he is the unparalleled fulfillment of all of creation. The whole world was intended for this specific and unique individual, and his life must therefore justify all that went into bringing the whole world into being.

What an unsurpassed opportunity and what an awesome challenge this represents! Can any man do that which will make the whole world worthwhile? **מה אנו שבי תזכרנו?** "What is man that You should take account of him?" (Psalm 8). In that very same Psalm which, in our understanding, speaks of the giving of the *Torah*, we are told, "Yet have You crowned him with honor and glory," and even little children can move the heavens, **מפני צויללים ויונקים יסדה עז** "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have established strength." For as soon as a child begins to learn *Torah* he begins to acquire the *Torah* in his own right, and this is what the rabbis mean when they say: **אין העולם מתקייט אלא בהבל פיהן של חינוך של בית רבנן**. "The world endures only by the breath of the mouths of children who study the word of God."<sup>12</sup>

It might perhaps not be inappropriate to point out at this stage that this concept of the nature of man and the nature of *Torah* is fundamental also in the understanding of another idea which often has been misunderstood. I refer to the doctrine of the election of Israel. Yesterday, my colleague Professor Talmon mentioned the vision of Michah in which he speaks of every people walking in the name of its God while we will recall the name of our God forever. Is this in any way in contradiction to the vision of the self-same prophet and other prophets – that all will serve the Almighty alone? Not at all! Not at all, simply because in our conception every man and every people has a uniqueness which itself bespeaks the greatness of God. It is precisely in that which characteristically defines this man of this people or this faith community, in which **גבורתו של הקדוש ברוך הוא** "The greatness of the Holy

One, blessed be He," finds particular expression. This is what the Almighty wants and therefore each man and each religious conception which strives to discover the Maker of all must see itself—not only *may* see itself, but *must* see itself—as being the purpose for which the whole world was created: **בשְׁבִילֵי נָבָרָא הַעוֹלָם** Therefore must every man say, "For my sake was the whole world created." And if only we strive to live up to this challenge, then indeed this is the fulfillment of "gedulato," of the glory of the Holy One, blessed be He.

#### NOTES

1. J. Hagigah 1.7.
2. Peah 1.1.
3. Avot 3.2 citing the verse from Malachi 3.16.
4. Daily Prayer Service.
5. Sifrei Deuteronomy 6.6.
6. Brakhot 8a.
7. Kiddushim 32b.
8. Mishnah Sanhedrin 4.5.
9. Bamidmar Rabbah 21.2.
10. Eiruvin 13b.
11. Cf. Taanit 9a.
12. Shabbat 119b.

#### Summary Minutes

Following the lecture by Rabbi Rabinovitch, a thorough discussion took place during which he pointed to the loose procedure whereby in Judaism views and practices are agreed upon, contingent upon the recognition of sincere devotion, both on the part of those who decide and those who apply for their decision.

It was also said that *Halachah* might be over-emphasized at the expense of *Agadah*, the philosophy which underlies it. Also *Midrash* should be considered in order to find ever new meanings in the Scriptures. Every Jewish decision-taking took place in the presence of God, as indicated by the phrase *da lifnei mi ata omed* "know in whose presence you stand." Organic and sociological changes had influenced the evolution of Jewish Law as rules had



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*BASILIOS STOYIANNOS*

**THE LAW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT  
FROM AN ORTHODOX POINT OF VIEW.**

To speak about the law in the New Testament implies speaking about it in a generally valid Christian sense, satisfying not only to non-Christians, but also to the Christian laity. It would, however, be a mistake to sweep existing disagreements under the table in the name of ecumenism, and even more so, to present a falsely unified statement which does not in fact exist. As work in the field of ecumenism cannot advance without a clarification of the respective limits, I believe it my duty, imposed on me by reality itself, to say openly to our partners in dialogue that this paper intends to examine the law in the New Testament from an Orthodox point of view. The question is not to assume an exegetical hypothesis but to accept the fact that the theological horizon of the exegesis is chiefly determined by the belonging of the exegete to a church community. The apophatic background of Orthodox theology, the problematic, which partly distinguishes and determines it through the homogenous character of Revelation and the insertion of Holy Scriptural hermeneutics in the mystery of the Church and, consequently, Church life – all these cannot remain hidden if the exegete intends to work conscientiously. Thus having established them, I will try to expose the teaching of the New Testament without willingly submitting the truth to confessional presuppositions.

To make an objective study of the Law in the New Testament (according to its objective reality), one has always to keep in mind the historic evolution of the problematic and the answers already given to it. Viewed synoptically, this evolution is a continuous whole and it is difficult to set clear limits between the historical periods. History flows like a stream, so that it is not easy to distinguish the various eras from one another. All the same, it is recommended to progress in a systematic way and to study the large sections of it in relation to major events. Some events fall within the context of our study: the so-called Apostolic Synod, the conquest of Jerusalem and the end of the apostolic era. Here we are faced with the beginning of the separation of Church and

Synagogue (a deterioration in relations between the Christian community and the Jewish central authority) and the Church's confrontation with Gnosticism. All these events are reflected in the Scriptures and the life of the Church at that period, as I will attempt to show.

**The Law in the activity of Jesus and in the early Christian Community up to the Apostolic Synod**

The teaching and, above all, the activity of Jesus cannot be understood without considering the opposition between the Master and Rabbinic piety centered around the Law. It is difficult to say whether this attitude reveals a completely new development, or the radicalization of a pre-existing attitude. However this may be, one thing is sure in the synoptic tradition: the attitude of Jesus towards the Law was not a normal one. We read, for instance, at the beginning of Mark's Gospel that Jesus had an argument with the Pharisees on the Sabbath rest. This is the first of many instances where the main point is "whether this is permitted on the Sabbath." In our case, the discussion centers around the concrete question of whether it is permitted to pluck ears of wheat. Jesus gives a dual reply. The first part, which may originally be independent, or, more precisely, related to another similar case, is typically rabbinic: "Have you never read about what David did when he was in need and when he and his companions were starving? Under what conditions he entered the House of God when Adjatar was high priest, and ate the sacred bread that nobody was allowed to eat except the priests, and gave a piece of it to his companions?" (Mark 2.25-26). At these words, no conservative Jew can take offense, because a question of law is answered with a quotation from the law. It is the same with the next answer of Jesus: "The Sabbath exists for the sake of men and not men for the sake of the Sabbath" (Mark 2.27). The Rabbi Simon Ben Menasja (c. 180 A.D.) said: "Law! It is written in Exodus 31.14: 'Respect the Sabbath, for it is holy for you, that is, the Sabbath is delivered to you and you are not delivered to the Sabbath'" (Bill, 2,5). Up to this point, Jesus' argument follows a conventional course. But as His answer progresses, it differentiates His person from His contemporaries.

It runs as follows: "Therefore the Son of Man is also the master of the Sabbath" (Mark 2.28). This does not simply refer to the previous answer, because it states that the Son of Man is master of

the Sabbath. Here we have the nucleus of a new understanding of the Law, which implies neither a radicalization, nor a new interpretation, nor a new attitude towards God, but which opposes to the Law the superior authority of Jesus as the Son of Man. As the Son of Man, Jesus is master of the Sabbath, and therefore his listener is no longer bound by the prescriptions of the Law. The radical change occurs, therefore, not in Jesus' teaching as opposed to the Law, but in the confrontation between the Law and the person of Jesus.

We observe the same phenomenon in other arguments, such as Mark 7.1-23. The Evangelist introduces the motive pure-impure, which together with the Sabbath and circumcision, constitutes the chief characteristic of Judaism in social life. Jesus points out: "Listen to me, all of you, and try to understand me: nothing that comes from men from the outside can make them impure, but what comes from men to the exterior is what is impure" (Mark 7.14-15). Here we have, again, not a new interpretation of the Law, but a putting aside of its regulations on what is pure and impure. Viewed in depth, this radical attitude – unparalleled in Rabbinic Judaism – can only be attached to Jesus' person and founded on His authority. One can again see in these arguments that the question of what a commandment means relates to the decisive question about the person of Jesus and stems from His importance. In other words, even in Jesus' teaching and activity the main point is not its contrast to the Law but rather the significance of His person as the eschatological envoy of God. Under these circumstances, one is also expected to understand the much-discussed logion of Matthew 5.17: "Do not think that I came in order to abolish the Law of the prophets. I came not to abolish but to complete." The first half of the verse is clear, up to a certain point, because the context gives the interpretation of the word *καταλύσαι*, to abolish, and Jesus means that He, the eschatological envoy of God, does not intend to abolish the Law that God, and the prophets who interpreted it, gave. On the contrary, He considers the Law as a unified whole – in relation to which one is not supposed to make any distinction between important and less important commandments – a whole eternally valid for the God who is speaking. The Law is the expression of God's will for the salvation of mankind, an eternal value, a whole. What is obvious is the context – as it is clear that Jesus does not speak as an interpreter or as a prophet, but as God's plenipotentiary. His words draw their authority from His

person, and not vice versa!

Problematic, too, is the meaning of the second verb to fulfill. The problem cannot be understood and solved philologically but only theologically. This is apparent when considering its interpretation. St. John Chrysostomos suggests three types of answers as to how Christ has fulfilled the prophets' predictions. On the one hand, He vindicated verbally all they had said regarding His person. On the other hand, He fulfilled the Law in three ways: firstly, he never overstepped the law; secondly, He achieved the same for us. This was because the Law's purpose was to make men just, but it didn't have the power to realize this; on the contrary, Jesus had that power and came in order to establish a new kind of justice through faith, thereby restoring the purpose of the Law (*ἔστησε τοῦ νόμου τό βούλημα*). Thirdly, He fulfilled the Law through His legislation for the future: for what He said was not an abolition of what already existed, but a strengthening of it and a fulfillment. Other Church Fathers consider the teaching of Jesus as a completion of the law, or they speak about His perfection. Photios, for example, speaks of putting the colors on an icon, thus completing what was only an imperfect sketch. In this respect, Jesus was the one who made the Law perfect.

Whatever the details, one thing is clear. The attitude of Jesus towards the Law was not the attitude of a new interpretation, a new abolition, or replacement through a new teaching. One can never understand Jesus independently of His person as the eschatological envoy of God, as only a critic of the Law. It is not His teaching, as distinct from His person, that establishes the relationship towards the Law, but vice versa: His person implies His teaching, and His personal attitude towards the Law. Thus, in order to bring God's will to its fulfillment as expressed in the Law, He introduces a new way, whereby man can meet God, and He is the first to follow that way. This ought to be the meaning of Matthew 5.5-17, since Jesus fulfills the purpose of the Law as the eschatological envoy of God through His own activity, which restores the real relationship of mankind with God. He fulfills it once and forever.

The christological principle pre-existed in Jesus' teaching but it came into the conscience of primitive Christian society only by grades. This was natural because, first of all, that community still lived in the heart of Judaism, and second, because the tradition was familiar with Jesus' sayings and the positive facts related to

the individual commandments. As concerns circumcision, there were no indications in the Master's teaching because he took it for granted as forming part of the service. As long as the Church remained within the bounds of Palestine, it could not be detached from the rest of Jewry, owing to their faith in the messiahship of Jesus.

The first step towards separation from the Synagogue was accomplished by Stephen's group, the so-called Hellenists. Stephen's activity led to his being accused by those who remained attached to the Law. "We heard him speaking against Moses and against God" (Acts 6.11); or: "This man is always talking against our sacred temple and the Law of Moses. For we heard him saying that Jesus of Nazareth will tear down the Temple and change all the customs which have come down to us from Moses!" (Acts 6.13-14). In the speech which followed, Stephen confirms the accusation in its main points and this leads to the stoning. It is noticeable that the first martyr has been stoned not because of his faith, but because of his criticism of, and his liberal attitude towards, the Law. This becomes obvious through the persecution of the Hellenist group, whereas the twelve Apostles remained unharmed in Jerusalem. It is also more than probable that the Hellenists were the first to bring about the practical consequences of christology. The fact that they preached the Gospel to the pagans after the persecution is less strange in itself than the fact that they drew the consequences of their christological premises. If God's plan for the salvation of mankind (which the Law was referring to) had attained its purpose through Jesus, one can no longer understand the Church as confined to sole acceptance of the Law. If Jesus is the one who fulfilled God's plans, then it is belief in Him that salvation depends on. As regards the Law, the Hellenists believed (so one can argue over Stephen's speech) that the Law constituted one step in God's revelation — nothing more.

Shortly afterwards, there emerges in Antioch the mission to the Gentiles. Barnabas, Paul and many others preached the Gospel to the peoples of Asia Minor and Cyprus. In the meantime, Jewish nationalism grew steadily in Palestine. The local church, already under pressure, is filled to overflowing because the expansion of Christianity abolishes the uniqueness of the Jewish people. One begins to sense danger, especially from the Zealots. James' death was the sign of an evolving situation. This practical situation, together with the presence of Christians who believed in the neces-

sity of the Law for salvation, led to the so-called Apostolic Synod.

The result was, as so often happens, a compromise solution. Priority was given to maintaining the unity of the Church. As far as the Law was concerned, however, it was impossible to reach a uniform and generally applicable solution. It was simply decided that circumcision and Law prescriptions could not be applied to the Gentile Christians. It was merely a question of respecting a minimum of cultic prescriptions as necessary to avoid relapsing into paganism. On the other hand, the first Christian community remained free to respect the Law – only the soteriological significance of the latter was essentially restricted through the emerging christology. What could not be put under control was the Hebrew hostility towards Paul and the Gentile missionaries.

#### **The Law in the Church from the Apostolic Synod to the fall of Jerusalem**

The open Judaistic attack on Paul inaugurated the next era of the century, in the course of which the correspondence of the Apostle of the Nations allows us to follow step by step the evolution of the Church. That Jewish attack on Paul reflects the situation in Palestine. Growing nationalism and zeal for the maintenance of the Tradition proceed gradually from Pharisaism to the Zealots. The Church in Palestine feels itself always under social pressure, which often reaches open hostility. The Judaizers managed, during the years immediately following the Apostolic Synod, to gain the upper hand, and they tried to stress the strictly Judaic character of the Church. The attack on Paul and his reaction to it need to be seen in that light. The emotional and, up to a certain point, theological dimension of the Apostle's reaction can only be understood through the activity of the Judaistic propaganda. In the center of the struggle stands, as in the struggle with the Hellenists, and as in the Apostolic Synod, the Law.

It is impossible to expound in a brief sketch Paul's theology of the Law. This can be achieved only after a series of theses giving an idea of how the Apostle of the Gentiles conceived the whole of his teaching.

1. The polemic tone of the Epistle to the Galatians gives way, with time, to the more pacific considerations of the Epistle to the Romans, without changing in essence, i.e. in a christocentric evaluation of the Law. The change in style and tone has nothing to do with Paul's theology, but is related to the growing failure of Judaizing polemics in the field of Gentile Christian mission.

2. Paul's expression of the Law should be understood in the context of soteriology based on christological foundations and not merely on a moral theology or anthropology. This means, however, that Paul considers the alternative Law-Gospel not in the perspective of justice based on works, or justice proceeding by means of faith, but that he takes experience of Christ as his criterion. The Law is not a path to salvation like any other, but one which, having formerly been considered absolute, has since been seen to lead to an impasse. This new conception comes to light through the work of Jesus Christ, in a manner that is not due to human experience but to a new revelation of God.

3. The Law is incorporated into the history of salvation, and one should not forget that continuity is to be found, not in a particular people, but in God. The powerlessness of the Law, so far as the Law is concerned, is not, therefore, to be found in God, but in the weakness of men, and is connected with their mortality. It was impossible for the Law to bring salvation to men as long as they suffered under the malediction of death. In that sense, one can speak of the impossibility of men to fulfil the Law.

4. The Law should not be understood as the sum of the individual commandments, a code of prohibition, but as a whole, as a means whose purpose is to lead to perfection, but which man is unable to follow for he remains always, ontologically, too weak for that. Only in Christ and with the guiding power of the Holy Spirit can men attain the purpose of the Law.

5. The Law and its function, during the interim period between Moses and Jesus, always evolve in the context of the new experience with Christ. In Christ as well can one expect to find the key to the correct insertion of the Law in God's revelation. And one can find here, in Paul, the way that the Church will follow after him: a typology and a christological interpretation of the Old Testament in its entirety.

Paul is proud of the fact that he, like Peter, was a Jew by birth and not a Gentile sinner (Gal. 2.15). This is valid not only for him personally, but for all Jewish people, as is pointed out, for instance, in Rom. 3.1ff: "Do the Jews have any advantage over the Gentiles then? Or is there any value in being circumcised? Much indeed in every way! In the first place God trusted his message to the Jews. What if some of them were not faithful? Does it mean that for this reason God will not be faithful? Certainly not! God must be true even though every man be a liar. As the scripture

says: 'You must be shown to be right when you speak, and must win your case when you are being tried.'" The history of salvation always takes place in relation to a right understanding of the function of the Law. Human witness should not delude us: "This is what I mean: God made a covenant and promised to keep it. The Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, cannot break that covenant nor cancel God's promise. For if what God gives depends on the Law, then it no longer depends on his promise. However, God gave it to Abraham because he had promised it to him" (Gal. 3.17-18). God's promise is the purpose of his plan for salvation, according to Paul's exhaustive argument in Rom. 11. 25-27: "There is a secret truth, my brothers, which I want you to know. It will keep you from thinking how wise you are. It is this: the stubbornness of the people of Israel is not permanent, but will last only until the complete number of Gentiles comes to God. And this is how all Israel will be saved. As the scripture says: 'The savior will come from Zion, he will remove all the wickedness from the descendants of Jacob. I will make this covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'"

The fulfillment of the promise is the prior aim: in this fulfillment God's justice reveals itself in a way which stands in no relationship whatsoever to the Law. One can understand this when one reaches the knowledge of the work for salvation of Jesus through the experience of the Spirit. For the promise of God to Abraham was not meant for the weak but for Jesus Christ: "Now, God made his promises to Abraham and to his descendant. It does not say, 'and to his descendants' meaning many people; it says 'and to your descendant,' meaning one person only who is Christ." This experience in the Church, when the Spirit reveals God as the Father (Gal. 4.6), is expressed in words that summarize the Christian experience of salvation (Gal. 2.16): "Yet we know that a man is put right with God only through faith in Jesus Christ, never by doing what the Law requires. We, too, believed in Jesus Christ in order to be put right with God through our faith in Christ, and not by doing what the Law requires. For no man is put right with God by doing what the Law requires."

The powerlessness of the Law to save men is related to the power of sin and death during the whole pre-Christian period. It is exactly this slavery of man under these powers that shows the objective impossibility for him to be saved through the works of the Law. "Sin came into the world through one man and his sin

brought death with it. As a result, death spread to the whole human race, because all men sinned" (Rom. 5.12). During this slavery period the Law has intervened in order to bring man to consciousness, to the reality of his slavery: "Law was introduced in order to increase wrong-doing; but where sin increased God's grace increased much more" (Rom. 5.20). "Why was the Law given then? It was added to show that wrong-doing is and was meant to last until the coming of Abraham's descendant, to whom the promise was made. The Law was handed down by angels with a man acting as a go-between" (Gal. 3.19). This does not mean that the Law is sin:

What shall we say then? That the Law is in itself sinful? Of course not! But it was the Law that made me know what sin is. For I would not have known what it is to covet, if the Law had not said 'Do not covet.' Sin found its chance to stir up all kinds of consciousness in me by working through the commandment. For sin is a dead thing apart from the Law. I myself was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life, and I died. And the commandment which was meant to bring life, in my case brought death. For sin found its chance and deceived me by working through the commandment; by means of the commandment sin killed me. The Law itself is holy and the commandment is holy and right and good. Does this mean that what is good brought about my death? By no means! It was sin that did; by using what is good, sin brought death to me in order that its true nature as sin might be revealed. And so, by means of the commandment, sin becomes even more terribly sinful. (Rom. 7.7-13)

It is clear that the whole Paulinian dialectic can be understood from the point of view of the resurrection of Christ and His victory over death. The Apostle underlines, on the one hand, the fact that salvation means eternal life through the victory of Christ over death (over which the Law had not power), and on the other hand, he does not want to lead to a moral or theological antinomy. The Law remains a good part of the revelation, even if in reality it only revealed the negative aspect of the human situation. It remains holy and good, but it can in no way bring about a new creation: "When God gives you the spirit and works miracles among you, does he do it because you do what the Law requires, or because you hear and believe the Gospel?"

At the same time, alongside Paul, we find the Hellenists at work. Unfortunately, we know little about their theology, but we have

no occasion to believe that they had a different point of view as regards the Law. That the Church of the Gentiles succeeded both in rescuing the Law as an essential component of revelation, through theological dialectics of a Paulinian type, and in keeping it within its proper dimensions, is not only due to Paul but also to other theologians of his age. They managed to put the temptation of "either, or" aside through sober theological reflection, so that only the Judaists remained in the field of fanaticism. The putting aside of circumcision was the first goal, the christological interpretation of the time-conditioned function of the Law as compared to the eternal promise of God, was a decisive turning-point for the Church in its struggle for survival during the third quarter of the first century.

#### **The Law from the Fall of Jerusalem up to the End of the Apostolic Era**

The fall of Jerusalem marked the beginning of a new period, both in the life of Judaism and in its relationship to the Church. The possibility of indirect social blackmail or influence upon the Palestinian communities, which up to that time was still there, ceased and the struggle between the old and the new people of God took on the characteristics of a purely religious and spiritual confrontation. This has to do with the increasing influence of the Pharisees, who in religious matters behaved in a more exclusive and absolute way than the Sadducees. It was also understandable that spiritual leaders of the Synagogue devoted their zeal to giving form and stability to tradition, an attitude which naturally led to the necessity of drawing a clear line between the Synagogue and the Church. On the other hand, the Palestinian communities suffered a heavy blow during the Jewish War, so that they lost not only a great number of their members, but also a large part of their influence within the Church. The Church was, from now on, composed of Gentile Christian communities, and this fact had as its consequence a displacement of the main problematics. New questions regarding the moral life of the faithful, the appearance of heretics who deviated from the original "Kerygma," problems of organization, the urgent need for drawing a clear line between Church and Synagogue – the new problematics moved to the forefront in all their complexity. Heading these questions was the need to clarify the connection with the traditional Scriptures, that is, with the Law. The earlier discussion was more or less the result of a reaction to the Judaic polemics. Now one had to consider the

problem not in this particular aspect, but as a question of interpretation of the Law. God's Law was there, but it was there as a permanent and generally accepted element of the Christian Holy Scriptures. However, being at the same time the scripture of the Synagogue, it was urgent to provide it with a new interpretation so as to clarify the boundary with Judaism and to justify it; all the more so, as the Dispersion showed a lively interest in the same direction, but from another point of view.

The starting points for the Church's answer were already there. Oral tradition had preserved a great many of Jesus' sayings, as did a collection of Paulinian epistles. One only needed to arrange this material and to put it together in one book under the aspect of christology already developed. It is in this manner that the Book of the Gospels eventually appeared.

The Evangelists show, in the details related, different intuitions into this or that point of the Law. As a whole, however, they put the Law under Christ's authority. They transmit the words and deeds of Jesus with only one aim: to show that Jesus Christ, as the eschatological envoy of God, both fulfills the Law and revitalizes it at the same time in its historical role. The quotations, so frequent in Matthew, referring to the fulfillment of the Law, the presentation of the Lord's Passion as an epitome of the Old Testament, the expression of the necessity of a new hermeneutics in Luke 24 or in John, are facts well known to everybody. The Law is holy scripture. This is proved through appeals to its authority in Jesus' arguments with his opponents – but this is so because the Law is interpreted in a new way by Christ. And this interpretation applies not only to the Lord's sayings in relation to the Law, but also to the entire ministry of our Lord. In the first instance, one believed in the unique authority of Jesus and consequently one considered His sayings as the authority of one's whole life. It was, more precisely, not the teaching that gave authority to the person, but the person that proved the teaching as something authoritative.

This christological consideration had as a consequence a new understanding of the Law. While the Jewish Law authorities considered the Law binding even on the prophets, the Church's theologians interpreted the Law as a prophecy, a prediction of God's revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. The Law remains an eternal authority, a revelation of God because it speaks about Christ. It is not its moral content that one has to preserve, but rather its prophetic character. Like the whole of the Old Testament, the

Law must be understood and interpreted in a new, christological way. This can be seen in Luke 24.25-27: "Then Jesus said to them: 'How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and enter into his glory?' And Jesus explained to them what was said about him in all the scriptures, beginning from the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets." In these general pictures there are, as one would expect, sayings. In accordance with the aim of each particular text the author has stressed this or that point. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows an interest in the cultic aspect: the Gospel of John attacks certain Synagogue (Judeo-Christian) circles attached to Moses (John 1.17); Matthew underlines the new justice in the sequences of antitheses in the sermon on the Mount, and so on. However, in all these differentiations, one should not overlook the identity of vision in considering the Law under one aspect — the new experience of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For here, in the resurrection, is the clue to a true understanding of the Law.

#### **In perspective: The Law in the life of the Church**

This christological interpretation of the Law, which I hope to have more or less demonstrated, prevails in the New Testament and remains a specifically Christian element. For instance, at the beginning of the second century A.D., we read in a text of Ignatios of Antioch: "I beg you also to do nothing out of eagerness to quarrel, but only out of the spirit of a disciple of Christ (*kata Chrestomatheia*). For I have heard many people say that if I do not find something written down in the scriptures, I do not believe in the Gospel. And when I said to them that it was all in the scriptures, they answered me: 'Look at this! They are in front of you.' But for me, my scriptures are Jesus Christ. And the intact scriptures are his cross and his death and his resurrection and the faith through him" (Philad. 8,2). In dispute with the Judaistic Christians, Ignatios does not want and cannot use the old scriptures as a criterion of the Gospel. The starting point remains Jesus' work of salvation and the right method of interpretation is called "chrestomatheia." To read the Old Testament means to read the Christ in it — in other words, to understand it through a new experience of the Church.

Some tens of years later, the same question again interests Ignatios. The apology in his dialogue with the Rabbi Trifon about the

Old Testament (it is no longer worthwhile to make the distinction between the Law and the prophets an essential one), is a witness for the person and the activity of Jesus Christ. The old scripture, the Law included, is a prototype, a prophecy of the new. As St. Augustine successfully pointed out later in the phrase "novum testamentum in vetere latet," the Christian interpretation is a clarification of this Latenay and thus an exposition of the unity of the entire Scriptures.

In the life of the Church, there were no more changes on this matter. The Law was a part of the Old Testament, as understood from a christological perspective. It had been read, interpreted and used for practical purposes. Thus the canons of the Orthodox Church have been frequently related in form and content to it (roughly 69 out of a total of 758, that is, nine per cent of quotations from the Old Testament, the major part of the Law). Textbooks on catechism often use the Decalogue alongside the Our Father as a starting point for expounding the basic moral commandments. Moses is called a "theoptes" (that is, one who has had a vision of God) and is held up to example. In short, the Law is part of Church life and considered as a part of Christian Scripture. It is obvious that this is achieved by applying "chrestomathia," the christological principle. This is not a peculiarity but the only way to make the Holy Scripture holy for Christians. In the end, one tends to interpret the texts not in themselves, but in relation to their typological significance — typology as implied by christology.

I would like to mention, in conclusion, one more point — specifically Orthodox, I believe: the absence of the alternative Law and/or Gospel in the sense the Reformation gave it in the West, where this alternative was the only one to predominate. This has nothing to do with the isolation of the Orthodox Church, as one would be inclined to advance, but with the quite different theological presuppositions prevailing in the East. It has already been often remarked that the Eastern Church Fathers are interested not so much in the problem of justification as in the anapasis or metamorphosis of man through Christ and in Christ. A comparison between the work of St. Anselm, "Cur Deus homo," and the work of St. Athanasios, "De incarnatione Verbi," can serve to show the fundamental distinction.

Metamorphosis is the aim of man already experiencing anapasis through the incarnation of the Logos. Anapasis is the new creation of man in Christ, the ontological change of the old Adam

through the incarnated Logos. This change of human nature, which has been made possible only through the Incarnation, is an ontologically new thing that man experiences through the sacraments of the Church. Metamorphosis, the change of man, is the consequence of this; it is the permanent struggle to change oneself in order to conform to Christ's image of God. It is nothing static, but something dynamic. Metamorphosis implies the moral change of man, the christification of his everyday life, but it is not limited to the ethical dimension. This is because the anapasis of human nature through Christ, like man's metamorphosis in Christ, is more than purely ethical. It is primarily an ontological event in depth, with world-wide dimensions and consequences. There can be, therefore, no autonomy to ethics, no possibility of isolating the Law and of considering it as antagonistic to the Gospel. The Law is one part of the whole Scripture. It has, therefore, no particular place in the present, remaining an eternal word of God, a part of the mystery of Divine Economy for the salvation of man in Christ.

### Summary Minutes

In the ensuing discussion, Rabbi Rabinovitch said that the statement by Professor Stoyiannos was contrary to most of traditional Jewish thinking. He took exception to Professor Stoyiannos' expression of "fulfilling the Law" as applied to Jesus, and also to the notion that the Law makes a man conscious of his enslavement and thus is cruel. A religious Jew saw the Law as redeeming man and salvation not as a moment but as a process and a goal.

Professor Stoyiannos agreed that salvation was a process but one which began with an act of God. There was no cruelty in making man aware of his ailings and of his need for salvation, because consciousness of one's enslavement was a precondition for being freed. In bringing man nearer to his fellow-man and to God, Christ began fulfilling the Law. This should be a link between Jews and Christians in their joint view that the Law is an instrument for approaching men and God.

Professor Theraios asserted that the fulfillment of the Law in itself brought man nearer to God. Why then, one might ask, was a redemption through Christ necessary? He quoted Paul's Epistle to the Romans, 7.9, to prove that, at the beginning of Creation, man



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*DEMETRIOS J. CONSTANTELOS*

## THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA: CANONICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Undoubtedly, one of the major and most vexing problems of the forthcoming Great Synod of the Orthodox Churches is how to handle and eventually settle the issue of the Christian Orthodox *diaspora*.

The term *diaspora* derives from the Greek verb *diaspeiro*, which means to scatter, to disperse. Historically the term has been applied on several different occasions. It was first used to describe the dispersion of the Jews. Following the Assyrian and Babylonian deportation of the Jews in 722 and 597, respectively, Jews were dispersed throughout Persia, Armenia, and elsewhere. A few centuries later, during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Jews were dispersed throughout many cities and provinces of the Greco-Roman world. Second, the term was used by the Jews for other nations as a reproach. When Jesus said “I shall be with you a little longer, and then I go to him who sent me. . .the Jews said to one another, where does this man intend to go that we shall not find him? Will he go to the Dispersion (diaspora) of the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?”<sup>1</sup>

In his commentary on the above passage, John Chrysostom writes that the Jews “Gave this name (diaspora) to other nations, because they were everywhere scattered and mingled fearlessly with one another. . .they called the Gentiles a ‘diaspora’ reproaching them . . .”<sup>2</sup> Byzantine commentators followed Chrysostom’s interpretation while some modern exegetes have expressed skepticism about this aspect of diaspora. For example, W.F. Howard writes that “The Dispersion among the Greeks might also mean. . . the dispersed Gentiles.”<sup>3</sup>

Third, the term diaspora was used in speaking of Christians living dispersed among various nations,<sup>4</sup> or districts and provinces of the Roman Empire, such as Pontos, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia etc.<sup>5</sup> In a broad sense, living in diaspora among non-Christians became akin to living as a sojourner (*parepidemos*) and pilgrim (*paroikos*) on earth. Figuratively, diaspora meant transience, living in exile with a nostalgia for repatriation (for

*palinostesis*), for a homecoming. In this sense all Christians live in a *diaspora*, all are 'exiles' from their true motherland for they have here no abiding city.<sup>6</sup>

In modern times the term has been used not only by the Orthodox but by other nations as well. For example, in Germany diaspora is utilized to describe members of any religious group living as a minority among those of other beliefs. Protestants living in Roman Catholic countries or Roman Catholics living in predominantly Protestant nations are *diasporas* (pl.).

Does the usage of diaspora by the Orthodox fit in any one of the above categories? Does the term express adequately what the Committee, which prepared the agenda, has in mind? In speaking of *diaspora* the agenda means Orthodox Christians belonging to Churches which do not fit in with the traditional structure of Eastern Europe and the Near East, or administrative ecclesiastical jurisdictions in areas not historically Orthodox, and even isolated parishes of Orthodox Christians living in countries and continents not historically Orthodox, such as France, the United States, and Latin America.

Several waves of migration in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth from Albania, Asia Minor, Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, Russia, Serbia, Syria, and other East European and Near East countries to Western Europe, the Western Hemisphere, and Australia have brought into being several canonical and uncanonical churches organized along ethnic or national lines. In the United States and Canada alone, there are thirty-six jurisdictions claiming to be Orthodox, Eastern Orthodox, or Orthodox Catholic. Of the thirty-six, currently only nine are members of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in America, that is, members of the voluntary association of major jurisdictions established to promote cooperation and indeed the unification of the Orthodox in the New World.

What is the problem with this phenomenon? A situation has been created which theologically, canonically, and missiologically is indefensible. In fact the present state of the Orthodox Churches in the Americas, Australia, and elsewhere is a cacophony and in full violation of fundamental principles of the Church. In summary, theologically the existence of ethnic churches, outside of homogeneous national states, works against the principle of the unity and the catholicity of the Church — at least, it so appears to the outside observer. It gives the impression that the Orthodox

Church is not one. It is very difficult for the non-Orthodox to comprehend that despite such diversity all Orthodox Christians are united by their common Christian Orthodox faith, their bond of Apostolic unity, by their membership through baptism in the "Body of Christ." The Church needs also exoteric symbols and signs of unity.

The existence of several churches dependent on the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, Moscow, Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria is contrary to the ecclesiological and canonical principle of one church and one bishop in the same district and city. Churches whose bond of unity is the ethnic character of their people (their common language, psychology, and culture) violate the theological principle of the catholicity of the Church because the ethnic character gives the impression, if it does not encourage it, that a particular ethnic church is not open to all but only to people of the same national background. I am aware, of course, that the term catholicity has other important ramifications. Whatever the emphasis on catholicity, the fragmentation of the Church does violence to the fundamental principles of the Church's oneness and unity.

The third serious problem that emerges from this Orthodox pluralism in the *diaspora* is the limitations which are imposed upon the missionary vocation of the Church.

The social functions and responsibilities of the Church as a whole are hampered. Antagonisms are engendered, the sense of love and brotherhood, which must unite the faithful as members of the Body of Christ, is frustrated, and the influence of Orthodoxy in modern society is minimized.

Who is responsible for the present situation? Perhaps no one, perhaps sociological and historical circumstances, perhaps human nature itself. Is it possible to accept the *status quo* as a lasting arrangement? Is it possible for the Orthodox Theological Society in America to discuss thoroughly this topic, reach certain concrete conclusions, and make appropriate recommendations to the Synod?

First of all the Great Synod must adopt a policy of openness, frankness, self-criticism, and realism. It is unfortunate that spokesmen of Orthodox Churches often discover convenient ambiguities in the letter of canons, in facts of history, or in the evidence of tradition which enable them to press for their own case at the expense of the spirit and the mind of the Gospel, undermining at the same time the peace and order of the Church. There is no need

to carry on crypto-polemics or use questionable tactics.

In its search for a solution to the problem of the Church in the diaspora, the Great Synod can adopt one of three options.

First, it can choose to do nothing; to deny that a problem exists at all and move on to other pressing business. It is the easiest and safest way out. After all, the present situation has existed for more than seventy-five years. Some believe that the present state of affairs is natural, human, and historically unavoidable. The human element, divorced from the spirit of God and conditioned by historical secular circumstances, is the basis of the whole problem. We are told that we should not be surprised at this fragmentation of Orthodoxy in America. After all from the very beginning the Christian Ecclesia faced divisions, schisms, heresies, and diversities. As the second-century intellectual Kelsos observed — the early Christians were divided into a multitude of groups and continued “to divide and cut themselves in pieces.”<sup>7</sup> But there was a time in the early Church when “Parthians and Medes and Elamites, Cretans and Arabs, the dwellers of Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, Pontos and Asia, heard the common language of the gospel”<sup>8</sup> with an eager heart and a searching mind. Are Russians and Greeks, Serbians and Bulgarians, Rumanians and Syrians, Albanians and Americans hearing today the common language of the Gospel? As fellow Christians, do they see themselves as historical accidents or as instruments in Divine plans?

Nevertheless, in their effort to understand their role in the diaspora, Orthodox theologians cannot ignore human sociological factors. Some may not like it, but what H. Richard Neibuhr writes is fully demonstrated by the facts of Eastern Orthodox history:

The world remembers that the idyllic unity of early Christianity was of but short duration: that Jewish and Gentile Christians, even in the days of Paul, often found their disagreements more significant than their agreements, their sense of race more potent than their sense of Christian solidarity. East and West and South and North, Slav and Latin and Teuton, have parted the garment of Christianity among them, unable to clothe a single body of Christ with the seamless vesture of his spirit. . . the Orthodox Church of the East maintaining a specious unity by recognizing everywhere the national principle in the organization of Hellenic, Russian, Cyprian, Serbian Rumanian, Bulgarian, and other virtually independent groups which do not even share

a common name and which in time of war at least, subject the principles of Jesus to the ethics of nationalism.<sup>9</sup>

The situation in the American diaspora is even more depressing. Take a look at the Eastern Orthodox World Directory<sup>10</sup> (not the best directory to be sure) and you will observe there more than fifteen ethnic names with two, three, and even four jurisdictions under the same national category, such as American, Russian, Ukrainian, etc.

The situation in Western Christendom presents no improvement, in spite of the work and the efforts of the ecumenical movement. In the words of Neibuhr :

The Catholicism of Latin Christianity, it appears, has made its politic adjustment to classes and nationalities, and more successfully than other representatives of the gospel, preserves unity in the bond of peace; but it does so by governmental and legal more than by spiritual means; . . . it continues to suffer from the results of that great failure when its Roman-Italian heritage and interest showed themselves more powerful than its Christian ideal. If the attention is directed to the North and the West, to the successors of the Reformation, the surrender of Christianity to national, racial, and economic caste-systems becomes even more apparent.<sup>11</sup>

A theologian of course may remind us that the sociological and historical interpretation of the plethora of Christian churches, heresies, schisms, and sects is not necessarily applicable in our case. We are reminded that "the Church receives her being and life from above not from beneath."<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless the obvious truth is that the Church not only accepted the world around her, but she has constantly adjusted herself to the secular world, to its mind, forms, and needs. It is well known that "the theology of the first five centuries can be understood only if the psychology of the Greek mind and the social, religious, political, and economic conditions of the Roman Empire are apprehended in their relationship to the new faith."<sup>13</sup> Why not admit that the present state of Orthodoxy in the diaspora is the result of factors very similar to those which shaped Christianity in history, that is, a difference of psychology, mind, culture, language, and education? Undoubtedly, the crisis of church discipline, the pressures of the national psychology of

each church, the effect of social traditions, the influence of the cultural and intellectual heritage, the weight of economic interests have played a great role in the alienation that exists between Orthodox Churches. Illustrations are numerous and not difficult to cite.

But the evil of fragmentation and the lack of serious cooperation lies not so much in the ignorance and prejudice that prevails as in the conditions which are perpetuated and make the fragmentation justifiable and necessary, in the failure of the leadership on all sides to transcend social, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic differences and bring about a strong bond of love and an organic, or at least a more visible, unity among all Orthodox. Nevertheless, no matter how powerful human factors are and how much the forces and principalities of the present *kairos* work against the Church, this option — to do nothing about the church in the diaspora — is not for the Great Synod. The Church, as people of God, lives in this world but receives Her signals from elsewhere and Her author is above the archons of the present age. And we must turn to Him for help and guidance.

Thus the Synod must press on for another option. The second alternative is for the Synod to work for the creation of one autocephalous, or independent Orthodox Church in each major country or continent under the leadership of one polyethnic Synod, headed by a metropolitan, an archbishop, or patriarch. All Orthodox, independent of nationality, race, and culture could become members of such a Pan-Orthodox autocephalous church. But is this possible? Is it desirable? This is the ideal but also humanly unrealistic, at least for several years to come. As Father Stanley Harakas has rightly observed “a church to be autocephalous has to have a certain level of maturity; be strongly established with the conditions for its own perpetuation, have a tradition of sanctity, piety, Christian thought and life, as well as a fundamental unity.”<sup>14</sup>

The American scene indicates beyond any doubt that we are not prepared for such an all-encompassing autocephalous church; not only because of strong ties between specific ethnic jurisdictions with their motherland, or cultural preferences, but also because of lack of preparation, training, education — even among the natives and those who have undergone a greater cultural homogenization. In my twenty-three years of pastoral experience I have found that every ethnic church has its own appreciation of Orthodoxy. With no offense to anyone, often more resistance comes

from those groups who claim to be more Orthodox than those considered nationalistic or culturally-minded. Any major effort or attempts to push all the Orthodox under one autocephalous church in the near future will create more schisms and additional scandals. We are not ready for such an ideal solution. I believe in miracles but not in such a big one.

Then, what is the third option? It seems to me that the Great Synod must realize the need for all Orthodox Churches in the diaspora to establish a loose confederation and be placed under the aegis, the guidance, and the authority of a Patriarchate – the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Why Constantinople and not Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Athens? There are canonical, historical, and pragmatic reasons which convince me that we need the Ecumenical Patriarchate. As Father John Meyendorff writes: “for the past many centuries, the Patriarchate has been recognized as having a certain responsibility for the entire Church as a center of consensus with a primacy of honor. This is why it is called the ecumenical patriarchate.” What Fr. Meyendorff writes concerning the role of the Patriarchate in Ecumenical Orthodoxy aptly applies to the Orthodox diaspora. I cannot agree more with his additional remarks: “In the present chaotic years, the Orthodox Church could indeed use the wise, objective, and authoritative leadership of the ecumenical patriarchate. Would it not be its obligation, for example, to come up with a positive, constructive, and practical solution to the jurisdictional pluralism in America?”<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the Patriarchate must take the initiative but what one church should not do by herself, the Great Synod must pursue collectively. Canon 34 of the Apostolic Canons is specific about leadership as well as about the close interdependence of all leaders and all Churches. It reads:

It is the duty of the bishops of every nation to know the one among them who is the first, and to recognize him as their head, and to refrain from doing anything unnecessary without his advice and approval: but, instead, each of them should do only whatever is necessitated by his own district and by the territories under him. But let not even such a one do anything without the advice and consent and approval of all. For only thus will there be concord, and will God be glorified through the Lord in Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”<sup>16</sup>

The canon is quite clear and medieval canonists, Balsamon and Zonaras in particular, correctly emphasize that “the first bishops of each province, that is, hierarchs of metropolitan centers, must be considered as head by the other bishops of the same province and that without their head they should do nothing which concerns the Church in common.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, unilateral actions on major issues of worldwide Orthodoxy violate both the letter and the spirit of the canons and of the Church. They should be avoided by all means. I proposed the Ecumenical Patriarchate not because of any vision for a new Vatican by the Bosphorus but because this is our best alternative.

Now the preeminence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which could unite all Orthodox of the diaspora under its aegis, is sustained not only on the principle of the authority of Church canons, but also on historical precedents. Canons speak of ecclesiastical jurisdictions when they speak of provinces under the authority of a particular metropolitan, patriarch, or pope. The celebrated twenty-eighth canon of Chalcedon, which has been interpreted in a variety of ways, specifically speaks of the authority of Constantinople over the provinces of Pontos, Asia (a province in Asia Minor), and Thrace, as well as the ‘barbaric,’ or developing nations within or adjacent to those provinces. Several other canons sustain the preeminence of Constantinople over other sees. Medieval canonists such as Zonaras, Balsamon, Aristenos, and Blastares are unanimous concerning the preeminence and the privileges of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. In their commentaries on the aforementioned canon, they relate that, as the Pope of Rome had authority over the bishops of districts in the Illiricum, Macedonia, Thessaly, Central Greece, Peloponnesos, and Epiros before the eighth century, the Patriarch of Constantinople was given authority over provinces in the East and such new nations as the Alans and Russians.<sup>18</sup> Certainly the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council could not foresee the enlargement of the *oikoumene* and had no reason to speak in modern terms of a diaspora. Nevertheless, in the course of sixteen centuries all Orthodox Patriarchates and Autocephalous Churches (and even Western Christendom) have recognized the Patriarchate’s spiritual authority over the new diaspora in the new Orthodox nations.

Historically, there is no doubt that the Ecumenical Patriarchate from the last quarter of the fourth century to the present has not only enjoyed but also exercised a special authority over Christian-

ity in the Eastern half of the ancient and medieval world. With the emergence of Constantinople as the most powerful and influential Christian capital in the Middle Ages, the Patriarchate there assumed more authority and became the *primus inter pares* in the Orthodox Christian East. A tradition of authority and responsibility for the churches of the new nations, such as the Bulgarians, Serbians, Russians, and others, was recognized and continued to exist in the later history of the Church even under extremely critical circumstances, until each one of those nations achieved its own status within Orthodoxy.

It is important to keep in focus that it was the undivided universal Church convened in one of the most important of all Ecumenical Synods which conferred primacy and privileges upon the Patriarch of Constantinople – it was not imperial law. Furthermore, it was more than a primacy of honor, it was also jurisdictional authority over several large provinces, authority to consecrate the metropolitans, the ecclesiastical heads, of Pontos, Asia, and Thrace, as well as the bishops of new developing nations which were either subject to the Empire or which lived in adjacent territories, and to look after their well-being.<sup>19</sup>

It is unnecessary to elaborate on well known historical facts. But in addition to canonical and historical reasons, practical considerations require that the Orthodox diaspora be placed under the spiritual authority of the Ecumenical See, which is envisaged as a more Pan-Orthodox center of coordination and leadership. No other Orthodox patriarchate or autocephalous church has done as much in the last thirty years to coordinate intra-Orthodox activities and to enhance the image and influence of Orthodoxy as the Ecumenical Patriarchate. While all Orthodox Churches are equal, whether mother or daughter churches, the fact remains that the Orthodox family of churches needs a center which would coordinate, take initiatives, mediate, and indeed lead. As we know, canon law, precedent, tradition, and history itself have made the Ecumenical Patriarchate a pan-Orthodox center with an international character and ecumenical responsibility. The argument concerning its ‘small flock’ and its location, which has caused many of its trials and tribulations, is not theologically sound. “Do not be afraid little flock,”<sup>20</sup> the Lord encouraged. The strength of a Church is not measured quantitatively, and its catholicity cannot be disputed on the basis of numbers. Was the Apostolic Church less catholic than the Church of imperial Byzantium? Was the Church

of the Catacombs in any better situation than the Church in Istanbul? Has the Church ever been at peace with the present world? Was the Church under Nero's or Diocletian's persecution less dynamic than the Church of the *Pax Byzantina*?

One of the first actions that the Great Synod can initiate is to agree to such a plan, recognizing first the need to unite all Orthodox diaspora into a loose ecclesiastical confederation of a semi-autonomous status, under one spiritual authority. One should not expect an immediate end to the canonical irregularities, if not chaos, which prevail in the Orthodox diaspora, nor should one expect the uncanonical situation to become subject to canonical provisions overnight. Economy, flexibility, love and compassion, vision and missionary zeal, imagination and cautious steps should direct the efforts of those in charge of the transitional period.

Orthodoxy in America could be united despite the existence of different languages, cultural traditions, customs, and values. Why cannot an Orthodox Christian be at the same time a good Syrian? Why cannot a Greek be a good Orthodox Christian? Is it possible to separate religion from culture? To reject cultural traditions is to reject the people who have given birth to them and sustained them. Religion and culture are not necessarily antithetical. The very idea of the incarnation and Christian redemption justifies the close relationship between faith and culture, faith and national character.

The final question is how does one visualize a united Orthodoxy of the diaspora under the spiritual authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate? I wish to address a few remarks to this question. Here I must pause and emphasize that in speaking of the Orthodox diaspora I include not only the Churches of the SCOBA Association but also those presently outside of canonical status. The Great Synod should show concern for all those who believe and feel like Orthodox Christians, all Orthodox who wish to be in full communion with the Churches of the Great Synod. I am quite aware of the canonical problems involved but Orthodox ecumenical interest must manifest itself first at home. There are hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians outside the canonical fold of the Church.

The implementation of this proposal requires cautious and firm steps, but steps constantly moving forward. I assume that the Ecumenical Patriarchate will become truly ecumenical, representative (if possible) of all Orthodox Churches. Either directly in one of its sessions or through the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Great

Synod should take certain steps

- 1 Establish a *Central Pan-Orthodox Committee* charged with the oversight of the transition of the Orthodox diaspora from its present state to that of a Federation of Churches, under a *Pan-Orthodox Endymousa (Resident) Synod*
- 2 Each Orthodox jurisdiction in the diaspora will continue to be governed by its own system of government, but all will be subject to the Pan-Orthodox Synod elected by the Ecumenical Patriarchate from a list that includes three candidates submitted by each individual Church
- 3 Every Orthodox jurisdiction should organize task forces or committees which will undertake to prepare parishes, clergy associations, fraternities, and the faithful in general for closer cooperation and the ultimate confederation of all Orthodox We need inter-Orthodox enlightenment and preparatory work if we are to make the dream come true

This approach to the problems of the diaspora involves tremendous energy, patience, and constant vigilance Nevertheless every effort and every sacrifice is worth the price

#### NOTES

For the sake of brevity, I have avoided referring to several good works on the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate as well as on the literature pertaining to the controversy over the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America

1 Jn 7 33-35

2 John Chrysostom, *Homily 30 of the Homilies on the Gospel of St John*, ver 35

3 W F Howard, in *The Interpreter's Bible*, 8, p 587

4 Jas 1 1

5 1 Pet 1 1

6 Heb 13 14, cf 1 Pet 2 11 and the classic Epistle to Diognetus, par 5

7 Origen, *Kata Kelsou 1 1* Library of the Greek Fathers edited by Apostolike Dia-konia (Athens, 1956), 9, p 72

8 Acts 2 9-11

9 H Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York, 1960), pp 9-10

10. Joe Kuzmission (ed.), *Eastern Orthodox World Directory* (Boston, 1968), pp. 23-25.
11. Niebuhr, *Social Sources*, pp. 10-11.
12. A. Schmemann, "A Meaningful Storm: Some Reflections on Autocephaly, Tradition and Ecclesiology," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 15, 1-2 (1971).
13. Niebuhr, *Social Sources*, p. 16.
14. S.S. Harakas, *Something is Stirring in World Orthodoxy* (Minneapolis, 1978), p. 27.
15. John Meyendorff, "Needed: The Ecumenical Patriarchate" in *The Orthodox Church*, No. 4 (April, 1978), p. 4.
16. Rhalles and Pottles, *Syntagma*, 2, p. 45.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.
18. *Ibid.*
19. P.N. Trempelas, *The Autocephaly of the Metropolia in America* (Brookline, 1973), pp. 46-48.
20. Lk. 12.32.



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DANIEL J. SAHAS

## THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA, CANONICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: A RESPONSE

It is with a special interest that I read Father Constantelos' paper, and with a greater eagerness that I joined in contemplating and discussing his remarks which are many and of substance. As a historian and at the same time a man with a long personal and pastoral observation of the Orthodox diaspora in the New World, Father Constantelos has dealt with his assignment pragmatically. These are eminent presuppositions and qualifications for such an assignment, which he demonstrates in an unmistakably clear fashion. As such, he makes some bold observations and some even bolder suggestions.

I will not dispute the substance of these observations and suggestions, although my personal feeling seems to be that the question of the Orthodox diaspora, in its canonical and ecclesiological perspective, is a much more complex matter which begs for a comprehensive analysis and consideration. This response is, purposefully, written with an 'idealistic' disposition and emphasis. It is, perhaps, a plea for a return to our possibly lost quality and trait of viewing things and acting upon them under the *theological* experience of the Church (a trait which we owe to the Church of the East and of the early times) rather than theologizing on our activities *a posteriori* – a characteristic of Western Christianity and of later times.

We, Orthodox, need to search into our tradition and ethos to discover the theological meaning and the implications of the diaspora, and to draw from them ideas as to how to deal with its canonical requirements. This would be the ecclesiological methodology for facing the Orthodox diaspora today by a council which, from all visible realities and for all practical purposes, is actually a council of Orthodoxy in the diaspora!

Father Constantelos' thoughts are presented in three parts: In the first, he deals with questions of semantics, as well as with some realities from the North American experience. In the second, he discusses three options being possibly available to the Council

in dealing with the diaspora. In the third, he makes some recommendations based on his third option, which he favours.

It is a matter of placing a different emphasis on some of the points raised in the position paper that has made this response rather extensive and seemingly critical—although in essence it is appreciative of Father Constantelos' remarks and in line with his concerns.

### **Towards a Theology of the 'Diaspora'**

One meaning of the 'diaspora' which Father Constantelos does not utilize and does not develop in his paper is the positive one which derives directly from the Biblical context and from the subsequent Christian experience, especially that of the Orthodox Church. There is a definite contrast here between the Jewish and the Christian perception.

'Diaspora' does not simply mean "scattering all over," but *sowing all over* (from v. *dia-speirein*). Although the Jews used the Greek word diaspora, they did so with the Hebrew (*galut*) equivalent in mind, which means 'exile': exile from *Erez Israel*, the land of Israel. The destruction of the Temple was for many Jews (and the Christians capitalized on this attitude) a proof that God had forsaken Israel; although for the faithful Jew the *Shehinah*, or the divine presence, has never left Israel-the-people but "accompanies Israel into exile, partakes in its sufferings and will partake in its ultimate redemption."<sup>1</sup>

For the Jews the diaspora might have been seen as a punishment or as a curse. The land itself was considered holy; the Sadducees, the Zealots and the Essenes were definite about these views. The Jewish nation as such was considered holy. The God of Israel had been nationalized and localized. It was only at a certain locale that God could properly be worshiped. Furthermore, such a locality was not even everywhere within the holy land but at a particular 'there,' at the Temple. For others, that 'there' was Mt. Garizin; but they were, after all, Samaritans!

For Christianity, however, the diaspora as a notion and as a reality was a blessing and a New Testament. Jesus used the image of a sower and of sowing extensively, and he associated these imageries directly with His own word, His mission, and His Church. He painstakingly described different ways of sowing, as well as different outcomes derived from it. In all cases He alluded to the successfulness or not of the sower, as well as to the receptive

quality or not of the soil itself.<sup>2</sup>

He proclaimed God to be a spirit (Jn. 4:24). He sent his disciples to “make disciples of all nations” (Mt. 28:19) and to be witnesses to His Resurrection, “in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Those who believed in His name and were baptized in His death and resurrection called themselves “Church (Ekklesia) of God” (or, according to another reading, “Ekklesia of the Lord”—Acts 20:28)—those “called apart” (*ek-kalein*) from the old, stereotyped, homogenized Israel to a new Israel whose land was the entire creation. They believed themselves to be members not simply of a visible ‘household,’ the household of Israel, but of a Body which was visible and invisible as well, a ‘mystical body,’ beyond comprehension, in space and time but also beyond space and time—a wholesome (‘catholic’) body! A Christian can no longer perceive the diaspora as a curse, but as a providential and purposeful act, and a call to witness; otherwise, the fabric of Christianity is dissolved, its essence impoverished and its message diluted.

No doubt that the diaspora that we are talking about in this conference, and which we deal with in our papers is one that has been caused by circumstances of need or crisis rather than by a sense of mission. The diaspora is, definitely, a historical and sociological phenomenon, and not a theological one. But the Church cannot afford to see it only as such, without denying her essence. The Church cannot afford to view the events of history as mere accidents without proclaiming herself to be one such accident. On the contrary, there is a providential message and meaning in the turns of history which the Church and the individual man are called to read correctly and respond accordingly. Man, all in all, is called to turn the crisis into euphoria, the curse into blessing, the taste of death into a reality of life, the experience of pain into a kingdom of joy, the bondage of slavery (even of a self-imposed cultural, political, ritualistic one) into an opportunity of freedom.

Christianity is, perhaps, contrasted to Judaism, among others, in the event that it has no fixed centers; neither a ‘Jerusalem’ nor a ‘Garizin.’ The fact that previously pagan centers, such as Rome, Alexandria, Antioch and Constantinople, became centers of the Christian Church does not imply that Christianity needed them to exist, but rather that it had been liberated from the need of previously fixed cultural and religious centers, and it was now free to exist and grow anywhere. Is it possible for us in the twentieth cen-

tury to defend theologically in a meaningful way any such center, on account of its ancient prominence or recognition? By saying this, one does not question the canonical order of the Patriarchal sees as traditional centers from where the Christian Church was directed and helped to mature. But the value of these earthly temporal centers must be transcended by the reality of the Church, which is not contingent upon the prominence or lack of it of such centers, nor does its essential being increase or diminish with time on account of historical circumstances.

### **Diaspora and Synod**

The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple resulted in the major Jewish diaspora at the beginning of this era. A by-product of the Jewish diaspora was the consolidation of a spiritual center of reference, the *Sanhedrin* (a linguistic distortion of the Greek word *Synedrion*), or the Council of rabbis at Jabneh. The function of that council was to provide for and ensure a religious uniformity among the scattered Jewish communities, in terms of a common observance of the holidays and of the laws of conduct, the codification of the Talmud and the vocalization of the Torah for the purpose of its uniform reading.

The event of Pentecost, on the other hand, caused the Christian experience and message to spread to the *oecumene*, to the inhabited world – where the world was. The by-product of the spreading of the Christian message to a world of different cultures, intellectual, spiritual and theological presuppositions and perceptions was the ‘synod’ and consultation with the Holy Spirit of Pentecost to define what ‘seems good to men, as well as to the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 15:28). Synod means ‘walking together’ – a re-enactment of the walking of the two, outside of Jerusalem towards the village of Emmaus – a typology of the ‘diaspora’? – with the risen Christ, and His realization ‘in the breaking of the bread’ (Lk. 24:35). It is this communion that makes the Orthodox ‘know each other and brings them together into a meaningful synod. At this point I find appropriate the distinction between a ‘Council’ and a ‘Synod’ made during the conference by Professor Cavarnos, particularly because of the theological rather than the philological implications of the words. No matter which word we are using, or which one will be adopted with regard to the convening Council (‘Synod’ makes definitely better sense), the important thing for us Orthodox is to understand the inner meaning of the event of a

Synod and its ecclesiological implications. 'Exile' postulates a Council which implies 'Rabbinate.' 'Diaspora' postulates a Church (Ekklesia) which implies 'Synod.' The notions in each case are congenial with each other. The position paper seems to deal with the diaspora of the New World primarily as a jurisdictional and canonical matter. It is my personal hope that the forthcoming Council will deal fundamentally with the diaspora as a theological-ecclesiological issue and then as a jurisdictional and canonical question. The canons of the Church have been the outcome of the ecclesiology of the Orthodox theology, not the other way around.

#### **Towards a Realistic Definition of the 'Diaspora'**

Father Constantelos defines *diaspora* as:

Orthodox Christians belonging to Churches which do not fit in with the traditional structure of Eastern Europe and the Near East, or administrative ecclesiastical jurisdictions in areas not historically Orthodox, and even isolated parishes or Orthodox Christians living in countries and continents not historically Orthodox, such as France, the United States and Latin America.

The definition seems rather deficient. Diaspora is constituted of the Orthodox Christians who as a result of immigration on the part of themselves or of their forefathers, live outside the geographical borders of the traditional Patriarchal or autocephalous seats of Orthodox Christianity, in countries not traditionally Orthodox, and who with the converts to Orthodoxy from the indigenous population form a Christian community in a given country, while preserving certain cultural aspects of their country of origin. The degree of priority and intensity given to ethnic cultural qualities is the factor that distinguishes a Christian Orthodox community from an actually ethnic and cultural ghetto. But even with the latter situation in mind, it is simply sociologically and historically inaccurate to describe an Orthodox community solely in terms of ethnic or national characteristics. Not to take into serious account the length of history an ethnic group has had in the New World, the successive generations of the diaspora, the degree of maturation in self-awareness, the degree of cultural and theological cross-fertilization and assimilation, as well as the number and quality of converts to Orthodoxy, even *via* the specific ethnic Church, leaves the picture of the present day diaspora incomplete.

With this reality in mind Father Constantelos is even more right when he characterizes the fragmentation of Orthodoxy, especially in the Americas and Australia, into numerous *ethnic* groups, as well as the existence in the same city of several bishops under different jurisdictions, as a “theological, canonical and missiological cacophony.” This is a realistic negative picture of the diaspora which the Synod cannot overlook. But first of all the Orthodox diaspora itself must become aware and appreciative of this cacophony. It does not seem that enough awareness and ecclesiological sensitivity has been achieved among the Orthodox population. Beyond some emotional pronouncements and fortifications very little preparatory work—a kind of ‘Sociology of Religion’—has been done towards a self-realization and understanding. Does this consideration have any bearing upon the question of the timing of the Council? “Do two walk together without knowing each other?” (Amos 3:3). The O.T.S.A. could lend a helping hand in gathering and analyzing material and becoming instrumental in composing a real and factual picture of the diaspora, provided that it becomes more encompassing and free from its own jurisdictional idiosyncrasies and ecclesiastical politics under which it finds itself functioning. The Synod will have to balance a great number of factors to be able to correct this ‘cacophony’ and bring it in tune with the complex reality of the diaspora. The Synod cannot afford to let the cacophony itself remain as an echo of its works. This brings us to Father Constantelos’ practical options.

### **The Options**

I think that the first option which Father Constantelos discusses may not be totally unrealistic and unadvisable. The question of the diaspora might, at the time of the convention of the Synod, appear still as too complex and potentially divisive an issue for the Synod to deal with it at that particular time. It might be even advisable for the Synod, if it feels that it is not adequately prepared or that it does not have the factual and spiritual strength, to postpone dealing with the question at that particular time, rather than to attempt to sanction with its authority something still brewing and in a state of flux. The Synod, however, has to raise the issue as a question of *catholic concern* and ask for the collaboration of all Orthodox churches, particularly those of the diaspora, to alert and cultivate the Orthodox consciousness for a comprehensive

solution of the problem. By doing so, the Synod does not deny that 'a problem exists at all.' No Orthodox ecclesiastic today is unaware of, or is not affected in one way or another by, the diaspora factor. There might be even compelling reasons for such an approach, such as, that:

- a) the traditional sees do not seem to have an equal opportunity to experience directly and be aware of, all the problems and needs of their constituents in the diaspora. It seems that the traditional sees are pre-occupied with the aspect of jurisdictionalism, particularly on the basis of a selective use, and interpretation of, canons promulgated centuries before the discovery of America!
- b) the diaspora itself is very diversified from continent to continent and from country to country within the same continent. A significant degree of similarity, in terms of problems, challenges and quests exists among all Orthodox, but to group all these in a short common list is rather an oversimplification of the problem.
- c) the degree of affinity or loyalty between a given ethnic group and its mother national church and its administration varies considerably from country to country, and even within the same ethnic group in a given country.

The second option is, I think, the soundest, especially in the way that it is phrased:

'...for the Synod *to work for* the creation of one autocephalous, or independent Orthodox Church in each major country (I would delete 'or continent') under the leadership of one poly-ethnic Synod, headed by a Metropolitan, an Archbishop or Patriarch.'

The Synod is, and hopefully this coming Synod will be, a representative body of all Patriarchates and autocephalous churches and thus a body that can set the principles towards such a goal. This Synod collectively must initiate and encourage the idea of the formation of autocephalous churches and perhaps new Patriarchal sees. It must liberate itself from such patterns as 'Pentarchy' or 'Exarchy' of the Roman past and take a realistic look at the world map of today. The matter should not be left to become one of competition by each individual ethnic community in the diaspora. This could result, actually, in the formation of 'autocephalous' ethnic churches, rather than of an autocephalous Orthodox Church in a given country. It has to be left, however, to the experience and wisdom of the local churches to strike the golden line, and balance (Orthodoxy is a constant challenge of balancing extremes)

ethnicity and Orthodoxy in a way that will serve, primarily, the Church of Christ on earth.

The Synod must, I believe, confirm the reality of the diaspora in all its complexity and grandeur and consider it as a dynamic extension of Orthodoxy in space and time. In this context Father Harakas' remark used by Father Constantelos is, I think, unwarranted. It is a statement of principle. In my estimation, it does not reflect the reality of the North American Orthodoxy. Orthodoxy in North America already does have a tradition of sanctity, piety, Christian thought and life, as well as an advanced degree of missionary experience and feeling; nor would an objective observer assert that it lacks a 'fundamental unity.' To think or to believe the opposite is rather offensive to the sensitivities of many Orthodox and, at any rate, it is indefensible. I would not be so definite as Father Constantelos seems to be in saying that we (implying the United States) are not ready for an all-encompassing autocephalous Church. Maybe not every aspect of the Church life has reached the same degree of form and maturation, but 'autocephalon' is not a crown of perfection, but a *modus operandi* and *vivendi* towards such a perfection. Has there been a *study* on the question of 'preparedness'? Have any *standards* been set explicitly? Have the advantages or disadvantages of a direct linkage with the mother national churches been assessed? Who determines the time when Orthodoxy in America is, or will be, prepared for autocephaly? Does the delay or postponement of granting autocephaly increase or diminish the *potentialities* for the maturation of Orthodoxy in America? Does such a delay or postponement contribute to a further fragmentation of Orthodoxy in America, or does it contribute to its healing? These are some sample questions which we have not worked towards giving an answer and to which there is a wide spectrum of responses. We cannot, therefore, be definite as to whether or not we are ready.

Like the previous two options which Father Constantelos proposes, the third one also is realistic and plausible. I feel, however, that some questions are in order, so that it can be brought into a sharper focus: Is the third option more realistic than the second? It does not seem so. This is an equally ideal solution, which also constitutes a miracle. But I believe in miracles, which are miracles precisely because they are acts or events that cannot be categorized as either 'big' or 'small'; they are extraordinary, daring events which require an extraordinary strength, courage and will power

to accept them and act upon them. Is it possible for 'all Orthodox Churches in the diaspora to establish a loose Confederation'? What does a 'loose Confederation' actually mean? Is this 'Confederation' less prone to create 'schisms and additional scandals' which Father Constantelos fears, and rightly so, than the second option? What is the practical implication of the words 'aegis,' 'guidance,' and 'authority' in the case of such a Confederation? The ecumenicity of the Patriarchate of Constantinople should not, perhaps, be questioned. But for this reason precisely, the event of its ecumenicity must not stop us from asking some questions, so that 'ecumenicity' becomes meaningful and relevant to us who live today, and to those who will be born, in the diaspora. Is the 'ecumenicity' of an ecclesiastical see unrelated to political realities? Was this so when Constantinople was elevated to the status of a Patriarchate, as well as to that of the 'second Rome,' even higher than Jerusalem, the Holy City and the city of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, the city of the Apostles and of Pentecost? Is the 'ecumenicity' of an ecclesiastical see an abstract idea, a ceremonial title, or a tangible reality with practical and concrete implications? Are there today any criteria for bestowing upon an ecclesiastical see the title of 'ecumenical,' or is this a closed subject, wrapped in the Tradition based on ancient canons? Can these canons be taken literally today? How, for example, can the 28th canon of Chalcedon, which Father Constantelos cites, be meaningfully understood and have application when reference is made in it to the bishop of Rome having authority "over the bishops of districts in the Illiricum, Macedonia, Thessaly, Central Greece, the Peloponnese and Epirus"? Do we realize the implications of applying these canons today literally? Has the tradition of the ecumenicity of Constantinople been consistently, faithfully and effectively cultivated within the diaspora, or is it something that we expect the coming Synod to have to impose as a tradition, at the expense of whatever repercussions? The real question is not whether the ecumenicity of Constantinople is contested in the diaspora, but whether it is simply known, comprehended and, thus, automatically perceived. A great deal of work needs to be done in this respect on both sides of the Atlantic.

### **The Proposals**

I could not agree more with Father Constantelos' concluding remarks. Again, here a shifting of emphasis might be in order:

- 1) The Synod must, irrespective of the consideration of any particular jurisdictional and administrative structure, point with emphasis to the *mystical* dimension of the one Body of Christ, manifested through the Church in space and time.
- 2) The Synod must foster not simply an abstract, wishful unity, but a visible communion and expression of all Orthodox Christians in the diaspora. There is no abstract, theologized or speculative communion in the Orthodox Church.
- 3) The Synod must seek to cultivate the experience of the diaspora and use it to reform the entire outlook of the Orthodox Church. It must, actually, seek to transfigure the twentieth century Orthodox Church in the midst of a secularized and earth-bound world, from a conclave of ethnic entities to a Risen Body that knows neither 'old' nor 'new,' but treats time and space as a New Creation (II Cor. 5:17).
- 4) The Synod cannot deal with the diaspora in its *absentia*. It has to deal with it after a meaningful involvement of the diaspora in the process of its own self-awareness and aspirations. Maybe the Synod will render to its own prestige and authority and to the entire Church an eminent service if it treats the diaspora fundamentally as an ecclesiological, rather than a jurisdictional or judicial matter. Such a treatment will more effectively bring the Orthodox Church to the realization of her twentieth-century dimension—which in many and good respects is a reality of diaspora—while, on the other hand, it will bring the diaspora closer to the synodical character and experience of the Orthodox Church, which is the primary source of strength and the guarantee of its truthful continuity. There might very well be the case, if, indeed, numbers as such are not, ecclesiologically speaking, essential—that it will be realized that the commonly held notions of 'traditional sees' and 'jurisdictions' on the one hand and of 'diaspora' on the other, have essentially been reversed as to who is who. Under the non-'Gentile' mentality of the New Testament, to be first is usually a matter of chance; to be second is an act of courage. But to be last is a virtue (Mt. 20:25-28). The establishment of a standing pan-Orthodox advisory body to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, representing each country of the diaspora, to review the life of the Orthodox diaspora and guide it towards a meaningful integration into autocephalous churches, is, perhaps, long overdue.
- 5) The Synod must stress that 'Ekklesia' and 'diaspora' are congenial categories. One should not look upon the diaspora as a de-

fect of the Church, but as the dynamic consequence of the Church being the Church. We badly need a 'Theology of the Diaspora' today, and the Synod must not let the opportunity go without saying *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est* on the matter. By defining 'diaspora' from an ecclesiological point-of-view the Synod will be able to create a theological foundation and a soteriological disposition while facing the complexity of the practical aspect of the problem. The sole purpose and the *raison d'être* of the Church is man's salvation: to see man, not in terms of numbers, cultures, languages, ethnicity, customs or political structures, but rather as man for whom Christ died. This is the only pre-occupation of the Church, and that must be the only one of its Synod. It is then, I believe, that the Church as the *pleroma* of the faithful will accept, and history will record, this Synod as "Great" and "Ecumenical." As the colours, the brushes, the wax, the boards or the walls became enlightened man, like John of Damascus and other defenders of the icons at the time of the last Ecumenical Council, instruments for extending the Church's Christological understanding, it is everyone's hope that the matter of the diaspora will become another tangible instrument for us, the present-day Orthodox, to extend our theological sensitivity towards understanding the mystery and the glory of the Body of Christ in the twentieth-century space and time.

#### NOTES

1. Nahum N. Glatzer ed. *The Judaic Tradition* (Boston, 1969), pp. 235-6. Cf. also the subsequent texts on pp. 236-39.

2. Cf. Lk. 9:5-15; Mt. 13:24, 25:24; Jn. 4:36-37, *et al.* Cf. also 1 Cor. 9:11 and 2 Cor. 9:6.



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## **THE ORTHODOX DIASPORA, CANONICAL AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE: A RESPONSE**

This response to Fr. Constantelos' paper will center on the ecclesiological dimension of his third proposal and its missiological implications.

Undoubtedly, the consciousness of the Church seeks a solution to the present dilemma in which Orthodoxy in the so-called diaspora finds itself. First of all, the word diaspora is an ecclesiological contradiction: wherever there is the eucharist, there is the fullness of the Church. The Church, then, exists in a particular 'here and now' as the authentic community of faith, the body of Christ, that has as its primary, essential and doctrinally fundamental purpose of its existence the experiential proclamation of the Gospel.

The apostolic faith-community is objectified, in every historical configuration of the Church, by that one and only totally complete and authentic Orthodox understanding that the Church has of itself, and which alone conforms to the standard of the New Testament, that is, eucharistic ecclesiology.

The earliest experience of the Church posits the eucharist as the essential quality of its existence. As society and pneumatic community—the creation of the Spirit—the Church is actualized by the eucharistic celebration and thus realizes its internal constitution. The Pauline theology of the Church is expressed in the image of the 'body of Christ' (I Cor. 12.27) and has the eucharist as its point of reference, term of definition and unitative principle. However, there is another dimension to the complete understanding of the New Testament vision of Church and that is the Matthaean-Lucan representation of *kairos* as a central theme. This particular expansion of New Testament ecclesiology concentrates on the centrality of the *parousia* and its relation to the Church's communication of the Gospel.

Although the time of the *parousia* was considered to be close at hand (cf., Rev. 22.10-12), nevertheless the primitive Church never rejected the mission of an ongoing proclamation of the Good News. Continuing the redemptive work of Christ, the Church com-

municates to man the gift of Christ which graces his life. This communication is spatio-temporal, societal, but nevertheless mystical and sacramental.

An obvious conclusion emerges: the Church is a church of service, of servanthood, adequate in all respects to that very servanthood of the suffering Servant (cf., Isaiah 52 and 53). The Church is a serving church because it must act to be Church, in conformity with the salvific will of Christ in dispensing, disposing, and ordering the new covenant of grace-endowment. This is the primary purpose of the Church's existence: to encompass all men within the sphere of that redemptive work.

Given these facts, I would like to ask Fr. Constantelos how his proposal relates to the existential situation. The autocephaly of the Orthodox Church in America exists by virtue of the Tomos issued by the Church of Russia in 1970. In the light of his proposal, does Fr. Constantelos envision the Orthodox Church in America's rejection of the last eight years of her existence, an existence realized and actualized in the eucharist?

If so, then the only logical conclusion is to say that the last eight years of the existence of the Orthodox Church in America has been inauthentic. The Orthodox Church in America, then, would have to reject its own ecclesial existence: an obvious impossibility for to do so would be to reject the covenant of grace with her Lord. The spiritual harm could hardly be articulated. Therefore, no rational or Christian solution to the ecclesiological dilemma of New World Orthodoxy could even conceive of such a course of action.

When the autocephaly was proclaimed in 1970, it was the only possible way that the Metropolia had at its disposal to follow the urgent directive of the Ecumenical Throne to normalize its relations with the Mother Church. A similar plea was made by Constantinople to its Russian Exarchate in Western Europe. In addition to this, the then Metropolia appealed, on a number of occasions, to the Ecumenical Throne to take the initiative at that time to regularize the existing situation.

The Holy and Great Council, then, in projecting a solution must consider the existential reality as well as the conditions prior to 1970.

The reality of the Church is the tangibility of God's communication to man. Therefore, when a situation exists that does not fulfill a given norm of the Church's fullness, then the Church's

task is curtailed and hampered and her essential quality is grotesquely disfigured. To make salvation accessible to man, to endow him with a presentational immediacy of it in a way that is relevant to him and which graces his life—this is the work of the Church because its cause is the cause of Jesus Christ.

No one who affirms that the Church is the body of Christ which calls men of all ages to salvation will deny that the maxim *Ecclesia semper reformanda* has deep and essential Orthodox roots. It is with an abiding faith in the Spirit of Truth that any Orthodox Christian must await the convocation of the forthcoming Holy and Great Council. It is with confidence in the fact that it pleased the Holy Spirit to endow the Ecumenical Throne with a primacy of service that we must affirm that Constantinople will exercise this primacy in a ministry of service to the people of God to resolve the ecclesiological abnormality of America. Thus the Ecumenical Throne exercises its primacy as a ministry of service to God's people because it presides in love, not in power.

The historical process postulates an ecclesiology of emergence. If the world, indeed the cosmos, is in a process of creative advance, then the Church as well exists within this pattern of growth-development. Ecclesial structures must be accommodated by this process for the apostolic community of faith to continue to be objectified in any subsequent configuration of the Church. This is the only standard of the Church that is qualitatively normative.

So, too, this process must be applied in the ministry of primacy exercised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the people of God in the New World. This ministry, being grounded in servanthood, is responsible for constructing new, and transvaluating existing, ecclesial structures to respond to the needs of God's people in this time, in this place.

One can be certain that Fr. Constantelos is not proposing the rejection by the Orthodox Church in America of its essential existence as a eucharistic community of faith. Nevertheless, to proceed as if the autocephaly had never been proclaimed would be pastorally irresponsible. Several hundreds of thousands of Orthodox North Americans identify with the particular vision of the Orthodox Church in America, the vision of the Church to identify with this culture and to sacralize it. In addition, statements emanating from other sources, for example, such as those of the leadership of the Antiochian Archdiocese, have consistently called upon the faithful to identify with the North American reality. Thus the vi-

sion goes beyond the limits of the Orthodox Church in America.

I disagree with Fr. Constantelos that it is premature for the Holy and Great Council to have as its *immediate* goal the establishment of a unified autocephalous Church encompassing all Orthodox Christians in North America. It is the *only* solution that is consistent with the existing situation and with the *needs* of the people of God. Not only this, but the forthcoming Council must see this unique solution as proceeding from the essential quality of Orthodox ecclesiology which realizes the Church as community of faith in the eucharistic celebration. Therefore, it is the *only* solution that is missiologically viable.



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*The Synoptic Problem: A Critical Analysis.* By William R. Farmer. Dillsboro, North Carolina: Western North Carolina Press, 1976.

The book falls into two distinct sections. The first and by far the longer part (chapters 1 - 4) is devoted to the history of the research on the mutual relationship of the synoptic gospels and their putative sources. The author gives a chronological survey of pertinent studies, from the beginning of modern New Testament scholarship in the eighteenth century down to the development of a scholarly consensus in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which agrees that Mark is both more primitive than and is a common source for Matthew and Luke. Particular attention is paid to the work of British scholars, specifically Streeter. The second part of the book (chapters 6 - 7) is the author's exposition of his preferred solution, namely that Mark is dependent on Matthew (chapter 6). The application of this solution to the exegesis of a number of selected passages concludes the book.

One should note that, though this is not explicitly indicated on the title page or in the preface, this book is an almost unaltered reprint of the original edition, which came out in 1964. The only observable change is the deletion of a section on p. 228, as a result of conclusions reached by E.P. Sanders, Farmer's former research assistant, in his *Tendencies of the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge, 1969); but in the index the references to the deleted section have been incongruously retained (see p. 294, s.v. Apocryphal Gospels). Since the time of its first publication, the thesis championed by the author has gained, if not acceptance, at least a more sympathetic hearing among serious New Testament scholars, and the investigation of the relationship of the synoptic gospels is again an active area of research (see P. Neirynck, "Synoptic Problem," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. Supplementary Volume* (Nashville, 1976), pp. 845-48). In a certain sense, at any rate, Farmer's is an important and seminal study.

How is the work to be evaluated, divorced from the intrinsic merits of the thesis it propounds? The survey of research in the first section provides useful background, though it is clearly less than impartial; the author's sympathies are obviously with the 'underdogs' who continued to question the 'consensus' hypothesis, even after it had gained the standing of academic orthodoxy. However, the argument that the popularity of the hypothesis was simply a facet of (outmoded) Victorian evolutionism is not demonstrated with any degree of cogency, and the author's analysis of the work of scholars such as Streeter is at times biased and unfair. Perhaps the first section should have been considerably shortened, and instead the author could have developed points which, though important for his argument, in their present form remain quite speculative and unconvincing, for example, the claim that Mark's resurrection account is no more primitive than Matthew's (p. 168), or that the presence of Aramaic terms is no index of primitiveness, but is simply a stock device, as in Hellenistic miracle stories (pp. 172-73). On the whole, the author's positive arguments, after his detailed and, on

occasion, perceptive analysis and criticism of the work of his predecessors, are rather disappointing. In short, though the problem discussed at much length is an important one, Farmer's book, unfortunately, in this reviewer's opinion, cannot be regarded as having achieved its stated purpose. For a detailed, impartial, and reliable exposition of the 'synoptic problem,' the reader will have to look elsewhere.

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*Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies translated from the Greek.* By Elizabeth Dawes and Norman Henry Baynes. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Press, 1977. Pp. 275. Paper, \$5.95.

This is an unaltered reprint of the translation, published in 1948, of three well-known and important Byzantine saints' lives, the *Vitae* of St. Daniel the Stylite, St. Theodore of Sykeon, and St. John the Almsgiver. This book has already proved to be a very handy work indeed, useful for introducing students without a knowledge of Greek to the world of Byzantine hagiography. The translation is for the most part idiomatic and accurate, and is accompanied by brief introductions and commentaries which help situate the texts in their historical context. It is good that this standard work has again been made readily accessible.

In the unsigned "note to the reprint" the reader is merely referred for updating of bibliography to standard works of reference such as H.-G. Beck's *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* and "the more recent fascicles of the French ecclesiastical encyclopedias." The impression is given that this is a matter of peripheral importance; however, the reader should really be alerted that very important new editions and annotated translations of these texts have in fact appeared in recent years. Thus of the *Vita* of Daniel there is the translation by A.J. Festugière in *Les moines d'orient* vol. II (Paris, 1961), pp. 93-171; the complete text of the *Vita* of Theodore, not yet available to Dawes and Baynes, has recently been edited, also by Festugière (*Vie de Théodore de Sykeon*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1970); the long recension of the *Vita* of John, which supplements the middle and short recensions, has been made available, again by the indefatigable Festugière, *Leontios de Neapolis, Vie de Symeon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre* (Paris, 1974), pp. 255ff. It is to be hoped that in future volumes of this reprint series, the bibliographical note will not be token, as it is in this one, and that important new publications will be singled out for attention. In this way the value of these reprints would be further enhanced.

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## THEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF CONCILIARITY: SOME PROPOSITIONS FOR DISCUSSION

In light of the coming Great and Holy Council of the Eastern Orthodox Church, a knowledge of the theology and history of the Church's councils and an awareness of the contemporary problems of conciliarity are indispensable for the responsible Orthodox Christian. The purpose of this study is to provide such background information and to present several propositions for discussion concerning the forthcoming council.

### Conciliarity

The principle of conciliarity (*synodikotes* in Greek, *sobornost* in Slavonic) is inherent in the nature of the Church. Thus, it is only in an ecclesiological context that we can understand the function and mission of councils.

The Church is the *ekklesia* (gathering) and *laos Theou* (people of God), a communion and community of persons chosen by God to be His people, a presence and manifestation of His Kingdom in this world. According to what is termed 'Trinitarian' ecclesiology, the Church is an image of the Holy Trinity and is the sacrament of Trinitarian life, the presence of the life of the Holy Trinity in the world. As a reflection of the Trinity, the Church is a unity and community of persons in which unity and diversity are preserved as they are in the three persons of the Triune God. The Holy Trinity is a 'council,' a unity of three diverse persons who live in communion with each other. Thus, conciliarity is inherent in the Church since the Church is also a council, an image and reflection of the 'council' of the Holy Trinity.<sup>1</sup>

The primary sources for investigating the theology of councils are naturally those sources dealing with the ecclesiology, the doctrine of the Church, as well as the canonical legislations concerning councils which the councils themselves enacted. If we attempt to define the councils on the basis of these sources, we find that there is no adequate theological definition given to the councils, nor is there a commonly accepted definition. However, we can offer a working definition: a council is a reflection and manifestation of the conciliar nature or conciliarity of the Church.

There are many historical and empirical expressions of this

'conciliar nature' of the Church; yet, none of these expressions can be fully identified with this conciliarity. Contemporary Orthodox theology does, however, distinguish three patterns or types of councils: the Ecumenical, or Imperial Council; the provincial, regional, or metropolitan council, which is a short convention of bishops of all the churches in a given province; and the council of an autonomous or autocephalous church, which is based on the decisions of Ecumenical Councils pertaining to the councils of civil provinces.<sup>2</sup> Some theologians add to this number the Patriarch Council or *Synodos Endemousa*, a permanent organ of church government of a patriarchal autocephalous church.<sup>3</sup>

As far as the nature of councils – and especially Ecumenical Councils – is concerned, these councils are *Church events*<sup>4</sup> expressing the catholicity of the Church. It is not accidental that the Slavonic version of the Creed speaks of the Church as 'conciliary' (*sobornaia*) instead of 'catholic,' since the 'catholic' Church is the Church of councils. Not simply a canonical institution, but rather an occasional and charismatic event, a council is convened when needed to deal with issues as they arise. All councils are occasional meetings and consultations of the bishops, personifying their respective churches. As such, their purpose is to achieve and manifest unity and consent in all matters pertaining to faith and discipline.<sup>5</sup>

### **Historical development**

The historical development of councils can be traced from the councils of the early Church to the 'ecclesial assembly' of Moscow, the Moscow Sobor of 1917-1918. Of special interest in such a historical study is the composition of the councils, which consists exclusively of bishops in the early Church and later, at the Moscow Sobor, expands to admit the participation of other clergy and laity.

The development of councils closely parallels the growth of the Christian communities themselves, since councils spring from the very nature of the Christian faith and Church. As the messianic community which received the Holy Spirit, the Church is that eschatological community which understands and proclaims the Christ event under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. At first this eschatological community is identified with the Church of Jerusalem, the community of the Twelve Apostles. Within this early Christian community, conciliarity is practiced and all important

decisions are made corporately. The famous Apostolic Synod recorded in Acts 15.6-29 is an example and manifestation of this conciliarity.

As the Gospel spreads outside of Jerusalem, each new Christian community becomes a replica of the Church of Jerusalem, and each is the *same* catholic Church, with the same basic conciliar structure. The difference is that the leadership within the community no longer belongs to the Twelve, but to the “apostles and presbyters.” Thus, with the growth of new Christian churches, the manifestations of the Church’s conciliarity multiplied. The council of the Twelve becomes the council of the Church, preserving the consensus on matters of faith and practice. In addition, each local community, centered around its bishop and presbyters also acts as a conciliar body. He who presides over the Eucharist (the *proistamenos*) is gradually identified as the community leader, who takes the place of Christ in the community. By the end of the second century, this leader is the bishop.

Just as the Apostle Peter is the rock upon which the proto-Christian community of Jerusalem is built, in the same way every bishop becomes the rock of his community. For St. Cyprian, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and Pseudo-Dionysios, all the bishops are successors of Peter since each of them preserves the total episcopate. The agreement among bishops is a sign of the faith of Peter.<sup>6</sup>

As need arises, the bishops gather together in councils to examine common problems and to make conciliar decisions. This system first originates in Asia Minor, where the bishops gathered to take a stand against the ‘New Prophecy’ of Montanism. During the third century, the institution of councils spreads in North Africa. The council becomes the “best device for witnessing, articulating, and proclaiming the common mind of the Church, and the accord and unanimity of local churches.”<sup>7</sup>

The Council of Nicaea in 325 marks an important step in the development of councils. It is the first of the ‘Ecumenical Councils’ of which we shall speak more later. The Council of Nicaea institutes regular provincial councils which are to meet twice a year, according to canon 5. Such provincial councils simultaneously preserve and expand the ‘ecclesial assembly’ of the local church. This is done by adding bishops of the other local churches of the same province, especially on important occasions such as the election of new bishops.<sup>8</sup> When the ‘episcopal’ conciliarity becomes institutionalized with the Council of Nicaea, changes are also introduced with regard to the councils of the local churches.

The provincial council now supersedes the original local council comprised of each bishop, his presbyters, and his lay people. Moreover, the provincial council introduces legal procedures borrowed from Roman law, e.g. the majority vote. Yet, in matters of faith, the charismatic consensus still prevails.

After the Council of Nicaea, the remaining Ecumenical Councils add little to the legislation of the First Ecumenical Council. The sixth canon of the first council of Constantinople (381) speaks of a '*meizōn synodos*' (greater council). Yet this 'greater council' is not what is later called a 'Patriarchal Synod' in the fifth century. The 'greater council' refers simply to the council of a civil diocese, the council of all metropolitans within a specific civil diocese.<sup>9</sup> Later, however, the ecclesiastical organization in the patriarchates and the autocephalous churches far exceeds the limits of the canonical decisions and legislation of the Ecumenical Councils.<sup>10</sup>

During the Byzantine middle ages, many important local 'episcopal' councils meet in the East without the participation of the Western Church. Especially important for the Eastern Church are those of the fourteenth century which deal with the theology of St. Gregory Palamas. During this same period of time, a new phenomenon appears in the conciliar tradition of the Church—the so-called 'union councils.' These councils in no way may be called 'Ecumenical,' in the sense of the imperial Ecumenical Councils of united Christianity. Obviously, a true Ecumenical Council cannot be a 'union council' since there can be no true Ecumenical Council without eucharistic unity as its basis.<sup>11</sup>

A more recent development in the history of councils is the Moscow Sobor (1917-1918). In accordance with the great tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the scholastic dogmatical systems in Russia previous to this council affirm the doctrine that councils are assemblies of bishops only. Nevertheless, as a reaction to the 'synodal period' of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Russia, an abundant theological literature develops after 1905 which defends lay participation in the great-council-to-come of the Russian Church. Consequently, when this council is convened under the tragic circumstances of the Bolshevik revolution, the council does accept lay participation, giving lay people a voice as consultants. Thus, on the basis of Khomiakov's theory of *sobornost*, the Moscow Sobor introduces a new principle which is foreign to Orthodox ecclesiology. This is the principle of 'repre-

sentation,' a juridical principle alien to the nature of the Church, and certainly to the ancient church.<sup>12</sup> After this synod, however, the Church of Russia does return to the canonical norm of having councils of bishops only.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Meaning of Ecumenical Councils**

Among the various councils of the past, the 'Ecumenical Councils' have a place of priority. An accurate understanding of the definition and meaning of an 'Ecumenical Council' is important. In particular, a clear distinction must be made between the 'Ecumenical' or 'Imperial' Council of the past and the modern usage of the term 'ecumenical council.'

In the context of the Roman and Byzantine Empire, an Ecumenical Council is an Imperial Council. Since the reign of Constantine the Great, or rather since Theodosios I, the Christian Church is co-extensive with the Roman and Byzantine Commonwealth, the christened empire. A general council of this empire is called an 'ecumenical,' universal, or imperial council (*Reichskonzile*).<sup>14</sup> The Ecumenical Councils, like all traditional councils, are councils of bishops only, since only bishops have 'power' over other bishops.

The ecumenicity of the council is derived from the Emperor, who convenes the council. In fact, the Emperor invites whomever he wishes to the councils, with practically no protest from his bishops. Whenever a conflict does arise between the Emperor and a bishop, the Emperor invariably holds sway. One example takes place in 553, when Justinian proceeds with his Fifth Ecumenical Council in spite of Pope Vigilius' refusal to participate.<sup>15</sup> Actually, none of the Councils includes all the bishops of the imperial church, which means that none is strictly ecumenical from the point of view of its composition. For example, only a few Western bishops are invited by Theodosios to attend the Third Ecumenical Council (431) in Ephesos, along with the provincial metropolitans of the Eastern Empire and some of their suffragan bishops.

Moreover, the historically proven fact that the Emperor both convened and provided the agenda for the Councils indicates that the bishops themselves acknowledged the Emperor's right to legislate over the Councils. Thus, the Councils never legislated on themselves, since they evidently did not assume the right to do so.

If the Ecumenical Councils are restricted to those imperial councils in which the Emperor convened the bishops of the Empire, only seven councils qualify for this appellation. The last

one is the second council of Nicaea (787). There is some discussion concerning a possible eighth Ecumenical Council. The traditional Latin enumeration proposes as such the Council of 869-870 held in Constantinople, which deposed St. Photios. On the other hand, some Eastern theologians propose as the eighth Ecumenical Council the Council of 879-880 which restored Photios as Patriarch. Since no agreement seems possible on this question, it is far better to keep the number of Ecumenical Councils to seven as the priority councils in the Church, upon which Eastern and Western Christians may agree. Among these seven councils, the first four councils have a further priority because of the importance of the truths which they establish.<sup>16</sup>

The purpose of the Ecumenical (Imperial) Councils is unity, not only as an expression of an accomplished reality, but also as a reality in the making. As far as the Councils themselves are concerned, this unity is a religious one: the unity of the Church, based on the identity of Tradition and the unanimity of faith.<sup>17</sup> Yet, this unity of charismatic nature does not appeal to the Roman Empire. Whereas the Councils seek witness to the Truth and faithfulness to the apostolic and patristic tradition, the Emperors desire unity and order within the Empire. The state, however, never succeeds in imposing its *pax Romana* over the Church.<sup>18</sup>

With the separation between Eastern and Western Christianity, a new meaning is given to the word 'ecumenical.' This meaning is a secular and political one, indicating a union council with the West with the purpose of restoring the old 'oecumene.'

To conclude our remarks on the meaning of Ecumenical Councils, then, we can say that these imperial councils are convened by the Emperor and are councils of bishops only. These imperial councils cannot be repeated since there is no longer a Christian Empire. Yet, the episcopal consensus which they achieved is always valid in the life of the Church. However, we do well to realize that Ecumenical Councils, with their relative and at times normative importance, are not the only source of *magisterium* in the Church. They are not the only criterion of the Holy Spirit's action in the Church. Local councils, which also witness to truth, are also very important in the life of the Eastern Orthodox Church.<sup>19</sup>

#### Authority Accorded to the Councils

Councils, and especially Ecumenical Councils, represent the

supreme authority in the Church. Whereas 'power' belongs to the bishops and is of a canonical order, authority belongs to the councils and is of a moral and spiritual order. Whereas the Emperor is the 'supreme power' in the Church, the councils are the 'supreme authority' in the affairs of the Church.

The authority of councils is not of a canonical but of a charismatic order. There are no formal guarantees in doctrinal matters. A council is not above the Church. Father Yves Congar expresses it in this manner: "The first four Ecumenical Councils have acquired a normative priority in the life of the Church, because they were a faithful and adequate expression of the perennial commitment of faith, as once delivered to the Church. Again, as far as the authority of a council is concerned, the stress is not on canonicity, but on the Truth."<sup>20</sup>

The distinction which Hans Küng makes between council and Church is also useful in understanding the authority vested in the councils. For Küng, the Church is a council convened by God, whereas the council is a representation of the Church convened by men. V. Bolstov expresses a similar view of the Church as *ekklesia*, an assembly which is never adjourned. Thus, the ultimate authority is vested in the Church, a divine institution. Since a council is convened *de iure humano*, its decisions are not automatically infallible except when the council proves to be an authentic manifestation of the Church herself.

The infallibility of the councils is an infallibility which comes to them from the Church, *ex consensu ecclesia*. It is only for polemical reasons that some Orthodox theologians oppose an *ex sese* infallibility of councils to that of the Pope of Rome according to the First Vatican Council. On the other hand, the history of councils proves that at times canonically convened councils having all the appearance of canonicity have proved to be fallible, even *concilia-bula* and *latrocinia*. In fact, even with the regularly conducted councils accepted as Ecumenical Councils, the '*consensus episcoporum*' was many times a myth.<sup>21</sup>

Neither imperial convocation nor imperial or papal confirmations of councils are automatic guarantees of infallibility. Actually, Emperors convoke many 'pseudo-councils.' The authority of councils depends upon their being the true voice not only of episcopal, but also of ecclesial consensus, since the episcopal consensus is supposed to express the ecclesial one. If this does not happen, the council is rejected as a false council.

The decisions of the Ecumenical Councils are mandatory, as much and as far as they are based on Truth. The accepted Ecumenical (or even local) councils have always expressed the doctrines given to the Church. These doctrines are authoritative affirmations of the absolute Truth which is in the Church, and which, being such, is mandatory to all. This is true because these councils have been accepted by the consensus of the Church as authentic manifestations of the Church herself.

Ultimately, the final authority of a council depends on the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is always free to speak in different ways and can never be imprisoned, not even by a council. Moreover, the Holy Spirit finds his ways to overcome all human limitations, and finally to speak through a council as well. Thus, St. Paul refers to the workings of the Holy Spirit in the Apostolic Synod: "It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15.28).<sup>22</sup>

### **Reception of the Councils**

To the question "Who confirms a council—the Pope, the Emperor?", the response is that the reception of the Church confirms the truth of a council. The authority of councils is based on their reception by the Church. Such reception is the witness of the Church upon the Church herself. In this way the Church bears witness to the truth of the decisions made by a council. Paul Evdokimov goes as far as to say that the consensus on a given truth is reached not during, but after the definitions about this truth by a council.<sup>23</sup>

It is especially interesting to note the presence of reception in the ante-Nicaean period. Although the Council of Nicaea introduces juridical concepts which were to replace the idea of reception, nevertheless reception survives even after Nicaea as the only form of confirmation of a council's decisions.

In the period of autocephalous churches, the idea of reception still prevails. Accordingly, the source of authority of the councils of autocephalous churches is the reception of their decisions by other—even all the other—local churches. The exception of course is the Moscow-type council in which no reception is required because the principle of reception is replaced with the legal principle of 'representation': since all groups (bishops, clergy, and laity) are represented in the council, the council itself is the expression of all these groups. Yet, this type of council is an

anomaly in the conciliar life of the Church.

The history of 'reception' or 'rejection' of councils is well known to the historian, but it remains an embarrassment to those theologians who seek clear-cut external criteria of the Church's infallibility.<sup>24</sup> No council is accepted in advance, and many councils are actually disavowed in spite of their formal regularity. The case of the Robber Council of 449 is one of the clearest examples.

A council is recognized as 'ecumenical,' i.e. as having binding and infallible authority, immediately or after a delay, not because of its canonical competence, but because of its charismatic character. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all Ecumenical Councils have witnessed to the Truth, in conformity with the Scripture as handed down in Apostolic Tradition.<sup>25</sup>

#### **The Ecclesiology Behind Reception**

The underlying ecclesiology behind 'reception' is identified as 'eucharistic ecclesiology' by Father N. Afanassieff. According to eucharistic ecclesiology, every local church is independent and autonomous and every church equals the other, for it is the same church. Thus, every church witnesses to the veracity of church life—of which the local council is a part—in every other local church. Father Afanassieff also states that reception has no place in the 'universal ecclesiology' which begins to replace the 'eucharistic' with the Council of Nicaea. In universal ecclesiology, in which the council represents the universal Church, there is no room for reception, since the council cannot be subject to local churches, which are but part of the universal Church.<sup>26</sup>

Both eucharistic and universal ecclesiologies have valid elements. Reception, which comes from eucharistic ecclesiology, is a valid ecclesiological principle. Moreover, if 'representation' of universal ecclesiology is replaced with 'participation,' this participation of all members of the Church in her conciliar decisions is also a valid ecclesiological element.

The ecclesiology that combines whatever is good and valid in both eucharistic and universal ecclesiologies is that ecclesiology, of which we have previously spoken, termed 'Trinitarian' (or 'Triadic') which views the Church as a council in the image of the Trinity. According to this ecclesiology, the persons in the Church and the local churches within the 'Church Universal' participate in the decisions made in a conciliar manner. The reception of the decisions of the councils is based on knowledge and consensus, ex-

pressed not only after the decisions are made by the bishops, but also before and during the deliberations of an open council, as every council is supposed to be.

According to Trinitarian ecclesiology, councils are and should continue to be councils of bishops. The conciliarity of the Church is a 'hierarchical conciliarity,' to use the expression of Father Schmemann. The Church is conciliar because it is hierarchical, and vice versa, since conciliarity is contained within the hierarchical principle. Emphatically, though, hierarchy does not mean monarchy. Rather, hierarchy means order among persons who fully share in everything which they possess. The Holy Trinity is this kind of hierarchy. In fact, we may extend our imagery and refer to the Holy Trinity as a 'Hierarchical Council.' Consequently, the Church as an image of the Trinity is likewise a hierarchical council. The Church is a oneness of many, a unity of persons united together in hierarchy. Bishops are at the head of this hierarchy, personifying their local churches with which they are in communion. Thus, agreement among these bishops in councils shows the agreement between their respective churches.

### **Hierarchical Conciliarity vs. Clericalism**

A concept which is inextricably connected with hierarchy is obedience. Unfortunately, this obedience is often misunderstood to be subordination. But clearly obedience is not subordination. The Son in the Trinity is obedient to the Father, without being subordinated. Holy ordination, which distinguishes clergy from laity in the Church, is a matter of obedience rather than subordination: obedience of the ordained, who responds to his call; obedience of the ordainer and of the community who accept the called one to serve in the Church according to his call. There is no place for 'clericalism' in Trinitarian ecclesiology as it applies to hierarchical conciliarity: the hierarch is appointed to serve the best interests of his people, to express and serve their needs, as their true representative.<sup>27</sup>

The hierarchical conciliarity of the Church expresses itself on all levels of Church life: parish, diocese, province, autocephalous church, and the Church Universal. In the early Church, the local church is the parish, headed by a bishop, as we learn from the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus. The presbyterium shares in the government of the church, together with the bishop, by serving as the bishop's council. But when Christianity spreads from the

urban centers to the outlying rural areas, the structure of the local church changes. When this takes place, the bishop remains in the urban center and the rural local communities are headed by their priests. As a result, the presbyter is no longer the bishop's consultant. Furthermore, the bishop, deprived of his council, becomes 'monarchical,' with the priests subordinated to him. Similarly, the priests become 'monarchical' in their parishes. This 'clericalism' brings as a reaction a rebellion on the part of the laity. In fact, this development may still persist in contemporary situations.

To correct the errors of such clericalism, it is not necessary to go back to an 'episcopal parish.' It suffices to make the priests the bishop's council once more, not his subordinates, but his co-workers under his direction and guidance. Also, it is important to bring forth the conciliarity aspects of the 'power' of the priest: the parish council should be for the priest the equivalent of the presbyteral council for the bishop. The decision-making power may still belong to the priest, yet the priest will be helped by all to express the 'mind of the Church' in making his decisions.<sup>28</sup>

### **Challenges of Contemporary Conciliarity**

Councils have always existed and will continue to function on the parish and diocesan levels, as well as on the level of the province and of the autocephalous church. On the diocesan level, there are two problems to consider regarding conciliarity: the first is the parish-diocese relationship; the second is the relationship among churches of the diocese. In order for a parish to be brought out of its selfish isolation and to experience the catholicity of the Church, it needs the bearer of this catholicity, the bishop. At the same time, the diocese, headed by the bishop, needs to be in conciliar relationships with all his parishes. The presbyterium is the bishop's council. Thus, decisions are to be taken in a conciliar manner, in order to be the decisions of the Church.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, on the supra-diocesan level – the metropolitan district or province, the autocephalous church, and the Church Universal – conciliarity is expressed and fulfilled in the council of bishops. Modern tendencies, such as those expressed in the Moscow Sobor, to include priests and laity in the council, undermine the hierarchical ecclesiological principle and true conciliarity. The council is not a 'balance of power.' The interests of the clergy coincide with the best interest of the laity. The Church as a council is truly and fully expressed in the council of bishops, if this

council is an open council, and its decisions are taken not as *faits accomplis* by the hierarchy, but are made with the participation of all as decisions of the Church.<sup>30</sup>

In Father Meyendorff's estimation, three important practical issues challenge contemporary Orthodox thought about conciliarity: the first is that, in view of the future 'Pan-Orthodox Council,' contemporary Orthodox thought should:

... liberate itself from the idea that a Council – whether 'ecumenical' or not – possesses a legally automatic infallibility, because this idea has an inhibitive effect... This paralyzing inhibition must be overcome. Conciliar activity requires courage and presupposes a 'risk of faith.' True councils have always been spiritual events, when the Spirit of God was able to transcend the human limitations of the members, so that the council became the voice of God Himself... Truth in the church does not depend upon any infallible institution, but is an experience always available in the *communion* of the church – this communion being understood, of course, both as faithfulness to tradition and as openness to the *consensus fidelium* today.<sup>31</sup>

The second issue is related to the conversations of the Orthodox with the Non-Chalcedonians. "Recent historical research and theological dialogue seem to indicate that agreement on the *substance* of Christology – which appeared as the reason of the original schism – can be easily reached."<sup>32</sup> A *formula concordiae* similar to that of 433, which would be in the spirit of the Fifth Ecumenical Council (553), might resolve the problem and heal the schism. However, the approach raises two problems, which remain unresolved: (1) the problem of continuity and consistency of Tradition, and (2) the relation between "the verbal expression of a doctrine and its true content: which of the two is really covered by the authority of councils?"<sup>33</sup>

The third issue has to do with today's ecumenical problem. In view of the present division among Christians, is it still possible to hold an Ecumenical Council? Since these councils are exceptional events in the life of the Church, they are not necessarily repeatable. Since Ecumenical Councils were imperial councils, and as the old 'oecumene' has been shattered, Father Afanassieff also questions the feasibility of a modern Ecumenical Council. He offers two possible answers to this question. The first is that a future Ecumenical Council is not possible because of the division among old imperial Christendom. The second answer is that a new Ecumenical Council is possible, since the Orthodox Church is the continuation of that

imperial Christianity in the East.

Moreover, the question whether it is possible to convene an Ecumenical Council today is somehow misleading. On the one hand, the Christian world was never really united: the old Ecumenical Councils were in fact divisive, and some of them (e.g., Chalcedon) remain divisive until now. On the other hand, the union we seek among divided Christians is not a mere union, but a *union in Christ*. The unity we seek is the unity that God wills. No shortcuts which bypass ecclesiology can lead to this unity – unity which is ultimately “a gift of God, which can only be received, and (if lost) rediscovered.”<sup>34</sup>

### **The Forthcoming Council**

Preparations for the forthcoming council are still underway, and indeed it may be possible for a Pan-Orthodox Council in our days to take the place of the Ecumenical Council of history. As far as modern general councils are concerned, questions previously unanswered by theologians such as N. Afanassieff have now been answered with the preparation of the ‘Great and Holy Council of the Eastern Orthodox Church.’ The questions include: “Who convenes the council? Who is invited? Who makes the agenda?”<sup>35</sup>

The council will be convened by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, with the consensus of the other sister churches of the East. The council will be a council of bishops according to the great tradition of councils. The agenda represents the consensus reached among the sister churches in the ‘Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference’ in Geneva (Nov. 21-28, 1976).

Although Father Meyendorff feels that the membership of the future Great and Holy Council does not seem to be clearly defined,<sup>36</sup> it transpired very clearly at the ‘Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference’ that only canonical bishops of the recognized Orthodox jurisdictions (patriarchates, autocephalous, and autonomous churches) will be invited to the Council.

Lay participation in the councils is a modern problem. Conceived as a reaction against the ‘monarchical’ principle in the Church, it introduces a ‘democratic’ principle, which is supposed to be an ‘Orthodox’ principle versus a ‘Roman Catholic’ one. Yet both of these principles are erroneous, because both of them introduce ecclesiological principles which are foreign to the great tradition of undivided Christendom.

Father Meyendorff raises the question of the principle of

'representation' which was introduced at the Moscow Sobor. Although he accepts the application of this principle on a local level, he questions the validity of it on a provincial and ecumenical level. His answer, though, is that as lay participation becomes scarce on a local level, it is possible to apply this principle on a provincial and ecumenical level to substitute for the absence of 'local conciliarity'.<sup>37</sup> Whether or not Father Meyendorff attributes the juridical principle of 'representation' to 'sobornost' is unclear. It does not seem that he does. Evidently, the only thing that he suggests is lay participation in the affairs on the Church in a conciliar manner. Yet, true conciliarity of the Church is a 'hierarchical conciliarity,' which excludes the principle of representation.

The councils of today and the future should follow the patterns established in the great tradition of councils of the Church, in order for these councils to continue to express the conciliarity of the Church. In the early Church, conciliarity was a permanent ecclesiological element: it cannot be otherwise in our time.

Nevertheless, in spite of the great progress made toward recovering the institution of councils in the Church, there are some who staunchly object to the coming council. I attempt to refute the major objections raised by anti-council spokesmen in a sequel to this study entitled "A Theological *Apologia* for the Forthcoming Great and Holy Council" to appear in the next number of *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*.

In conclusion, we may say that whatever the problems of contemporary conciliarity of the Church might be, there is hope that the Holy Spirit of God will lead the Church to resolve these problems. I heartily agree with Father Meyendorff when he says: "If we believe that the Holy Church of God is a living reality today, we also believe that the Spirit can overcome human limitations and unpreparedness as well as all forms of secular division, and can speak to us through a true and authentic Council."<sup>38</sup>

#### NOTES

1. A. Schmemann, "Towards a Theology of Councils," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 6 (4, 1962), pp. 170, 172, 173.
2. See N. Afanassieff, "Le Concile dan la Théologie orthodoxe russe," *Irenikon*, 35 (1962), pp. 317, 322; also, Schmemann, pp. 171, 175-76, 183.
3. Schmemann, p. 171.
4. J. Meyendorff, "What is an Ecumenical Council?" *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 17 (4, 1973), p. 260.

5. G. Florovsky, "The Authority of the Ancient Councils and the Tradition of the Fathers," *Bible, Church, and Tradition*, Belmont, Mass. (1972), pp. 94, 96; see also Schmemann, pp. 170, 172-73.

6. Meyendorff, pp. 260-61.
7. Florovsky, p. 94.
8. Afanassieff, p. 321.
9. Meyendorff, p. 264.
10. Afanassieff, p. 322.
11. Meyendorff, p. 267-68.
12. Afanassieff, p. 325.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 323. Cf. Schmemann, p. 171.
14. Florovsky, p. 95.
15. Meyendorff, p. 267; Afanassieff, p. 319.
16. Florovsky, p. 97, quoting Y. Congar.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 94-95.
18. Meyendorff, p. 265.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 266, 269.
20. Florovsky, pp. 96, 97, 103.
21. Afanassieff, pp. 329-31.
22. Meyendorff, pp. 266, 267, 272-73.
23. Afanassieff, pp. 318, 334, 335, 337.
24. Meyendorff, p. 266.
25. Florovsky, p. 96.
26. Afanassieff, pp. 318, 321, 325, 335, 337.
27. Schmemann, pp. 173-77.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 175-78.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 180.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 183-84.
31. Meyendorff, p. 270.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*, pp. 271-72.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 272.
35. Afanassieff, p. 319.
36. Meyendorff, p. 271.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 270-71.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 273.



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*GEORGE C. PAPADEMETRIOU*

## **THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE FORTHCOMING GREAT COUNCIL**

Your Eminences,  
Your Graces,  
Reverend Fathers, My Brothers and Sisters:

The Church for Orthodox Christians is essentially conciliar. It is in council that the unity and catholicity of the Church is manifested. We hope, as Orthodox Christians, that the forthcoming Great Council will bring more order to our Holy Church. I should like to describe my hopes for the Council as it affects the Church in general.

For the sake of clarity, let us briefly reexamine the historical aspect of the various councils. The Church, when faced with a serious problem, made every attempt to resolve it by a consensus of the episcopate to preserve the pure faith and to maintain the unity of all the faithful.

This is illustrated in the Early Church when the question arose whether or not to Judaize Gentile Christians. In the Lucan account, heated debate took place among the apostles, chiefly Peter and Paul, each of whom stated his opinion and gave the reasons for his position. The consensus of the apostles was accepted, the unity of the Church was preserved, and the message of the Gospel was brought to the Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> The apostles saw the results of the meeting at Jerusalem (ca. A.D. 50) in these terms: "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us."<sup>2</sup> That is to say the voice of the apostles was seen from this early date to be the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The convocation of a council presupposes a serious problem that is faced by the Church and one that needs to be resolved. On each occasion the bishops of the Church, in imitation of the Jerusalem prototype, came together to discuss and to solve the problem at hand. Councils of importance to the life of the Church should not be identified only with the Constantinean era, for prior to that many councils were held at various places in the Roman Empire (for example, Carthage and Elvira).<sup>3</sup> According to Georges Florovsky, "the councils of the Early Church, in the

first three centuries, were meetings, convened for special purposes, usually in the situation of urgency, to discuss particular items of common concern. They were *events* rather than institutions.”<sup>4</sup>

It is interesting and important to note that the ‘General Councils’ after Nicaea (A.D. 325) were in effect ‘Imperial Councils.’ That is, they resulted from, if not a union, coexistence of Church and Empire, a “theocratic *Res publica Christiana*.”<sup>5</sup>

Father Florovsky uses the description of Hans Küng to illustrate the emphasis of the conciliar reality in the Church, namely, the suggestion that the Church should be regarded “as a council, convened by God Himself . . .” and that, the historic, Ecumenical Councils should be seen as ‘representations’ of the Church. The Russian theologian V. V. Bolotov had the same emphasis when he wrote: “[The] Church is *ecclesia*, an assembly, which is never adjourned.”<sup>6</sup> The council is therefore “a true image or manifestation of the Church herself.”<sup>7</sup>

Our expectation of the forthcoming Great Council, as the meeting of the episcopate of the Orthodox Catholic Church, is to set our own house in order and to give us direction in our relations with Christians separated from us. It seems to me that we ought to avoid having as an objective the ‘renewal doctrine.’ Needless to say, we cannot deviate from the “doctrines received in the Gospel.”<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the Church must accept the “theological challenges” of every age and answer the “theological questions” for each age.<sup>9</sup> This can only be done by the Orthodox Christian Church if her theologians have done extensive preliminary work in the matter. It seems premature and unwise for the forthcoming Great Council to set itself the formidable task of attempting the ‘renewal of doctrine.’

Often we give the impression that our Church has not convened an ecumenical council since the Seventh Ecumenical or “Imperial Council” held in Nicaea in A.D. 787. It is a fact that holy and great councils were assembled after that date and that they were of equal importance with the first seven because they also established the Orthodox doctrines which have been binding for the Orthodox faithful in subsequent ages. Such are the Councils of Constantinople of A.D. 1341, 1347, and 1351 that settled the question of Hesychasm.<sup>10</sup> Nor may we neglect reference to the later councils that were occasioned by the Calvanistic confession attributed to Cyril Loukaris.<sup>11</sup> Similar is the ‘Holy and Great

Council' held in Constantinople in 1872 that condemned as alien to the Christian Church 'Ethnophyletism' (ultra-nationalism) or political racism.<sup>12</sup>

All these later councils were assemblies of the episcopate of the Church that gave evidence to the manifestation of the Church's strength to proclaim perpetually the truth and message of the Gospel, which it has preserved in its purity through the centuries.

The Church in the twentieth century is once again calling the episcopate to assemble in council to resolve certain crucial contemporary problems confronting the Orthodox. The urgent call for the council is not the renewal and reshaping of doctrines or to make new doctrines. It is to restore the canonical order of the Orthodox jurisdictions of the 'diaspora,' and to define the relationship of the Orthodox Church with other churches, with special reference to Christian unity, as well as to deal with other crucial matters.

We, therefore, are praying for a 'Holy and Great Council' that will bring order and unity to our Holy Church. The expectations and theological implications of the forthcoming Holy and Great Council will be discussed by the invited speakers during this Third International Conference of Orthodox Theologians.

On behalf of the Orthodox Theological Society in America, I take this opportunity to welcome our distinguished scholars from Europe, the Middle East, and America, and all of you who have come to participate in this Conference. The Orthodox Theological Society in America accepts the challenge of theology today to proclaim the *kerygma* of Christ and the message of the Church.

#### NOTES

1 Acts 15

2 Acts 15 28

3 For the origin of the conciliar system, that is, the assembly of bishops to resolve ecclesiastical problems, see Francis Dvornik, "Origins of Episcopal Synods" in *The One and Future Church. A Communion of Freedom Studies on Unity and Collegiality in the Church*, James A. Coriden, Editor (Staten Island, 1971), pp. 25-56.

4. Georges Florovsky, "The Authority of the Ancient Councils and the Tradition of the Fathers," in *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View*, 1 (Belmont, Mass., 1972), p. 94.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
8. Hans Küng claims that the Church should reshape its doctrines for each age. *The Council, Reform and Reunion*, Trans. Cecil Hastings (New York, 1961), p. 114.
9. *Ibid.*
10. John Karmires, *Dogmatica et Symbolica Monumenta Orthodoxae Catholicae Ecclesiae*, 1 (Athens, 1960), Introduction pp. 348-54, texts 354-416.
11. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, The Council of Constantinople of 1638, pp. 562 (642)-575 (655); the Councils of Constantinople and Jassy of 1642, pp. 575 (655) - 582 (662); Constantinople (1672), pp. 687 (767) - 694 (774); Jerusalem (1672), pp. 694 (774) - 733 (813); Constantinople (1691), pp. 773 (853) - 783 (863).
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 930a (1010) - 9302 (1016).



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occasion, perceptive analysis and criticism of the work of his predecessors, are rather disappointing. In short, though the problem discussed at much length is an important one, Farmer's book, unfortunately, in this reviewer's opinion, cannot be regarded as having achieved its stated purpose. For a detailed, impartial, and reliable exposition of the 'synoptic problem,' the reader will have to look elsewhere.

Stephen Gero  
*Brown University*

*Three Byzantine Saints: Contemporary Biographies translated from the Greek.* By Elizabeth Dawes and Norman Henry Baynes. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Press, 1977. Pp. 275. Paper, \$5.95.

This is an unaltered reprint of the translation, published in 1948, of three well-known and important Byzantine saints' lives, the *Vitae* of St. Daniel the Stylite, St. Theodore of Sykeon, and St. John the Almsgiver. This book has already proved to be a very handy work indeed, useful for introducing students without a knowledge of Greek to the world of Byzantine hagiography. The translation is for the most part idiomatic and accurate, and is accompanied by brief introductions and commentaries which help situate the texts in their historical context. It is good that this standard work has again been made readily accessible.

In the unsigned "note to the reprint" the reader is merely referred for updating of bibliography to standard works of reference such as H.-G. Beck's *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* and "the more recent fascicles of the French ecclesiastical encyclopedias." The impression is given that this is a matter of peripheral importance; however, the reader should really be alerted that very important new editions and annotated translations of these texts have in fact appeared in recent years. Thus of the *Vita* of Daniel there is the translation by A.J. Festugière in *Les moines d'orient* vol. II (Paris, 1961), pp. 93-171; the complete text of the *Vita* of Theodore, not yet available to Dawes and Baynes, has recently been edited, also by Festugière (*Vie de Théodore de Sykeon*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1970); the long recension of the *Vita* of John, which supplements the middle and short recensions, has been made available, again by the indefatigable Festugière, *Leontios de Neapolis, Vie de Symeon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre* (Paris, 1974), pp. 255ff. It is to be hoped that in future volumes of this reprint series, the bibliographical note will not be token, as it is in this one, and that important new publications will be singled out for attention. In this way the value of these reprints would be further enhanced.

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## **SHEMARYAHU TALMON**

### **TORAH AS A CONCEPT AND VITAL PRINCIPLE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE**

Professor Papandreou has described our colloquium as an academic discussion among theologians and scholars of various religious persuasions, modes of faith and thought. This description is justified by the composition of the gathering assembled here in Lucerne and especially by the fact that this assembly is taking place in the Theological Faculty of the university. It is thus essentially a legitimate and perhaps also appropriate description. But let me suggest a slight correction, based on Jewish usage, which expresses an idea that I am going to develop in my detailed argument. According to Jewish tradition, every *Sichat Talmidei Chachamim*, i.e. every debate among sages or among students aspiring to become sages must have as its end not the mere elucidation of theories in the form of a scholastic exercise, but should—at any rate ideally—lead to practical conclusions. The discussions of sages result in decisions affecting everyday life. They concern the life of the individual and of society, even though on the surface they may give the impression of dealing with abstract notions in which the disputants aim at proving their astuteness and their consummate skill in the art of hairsplitting. Virtuosity in the contest of wits is regarded not as an aim, but as means of clarifying principles and formulating practical rules which serve to regulate everyday life, and of making manifest the attitudes of the disputants and of the community which they represent.

We should adopt these guidelines in our present discussions. Our colloquium, a conversation between qualified representatives of Orthodox Christianity, the Roman Church, and various streams in Judaism, must not become the arena for an intellectual contest in which we try to convince one another to accept our own particular interpretation of articles of faith which spring from a common root, viz. the Hebrew Bible which is the Old Testament of the Church. Furthermore, we cannot content ourselves by confronting one another with the intrinsic and methodological correctness of our respective ideas about the subject we have undertaken to examine: Law in Judaism and in Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christianity. Even if we who are assembled here succeed—as it is to

be hoped we shall—in gaining from our colloquium new knowledge of each other's range of ideas, and perhaps if each of us through the dialogue attains also new insight into our own system of faith, the object of the exercise is still not completely achieved. For, as my friend Dr. Riegner has already hinted, our colloquium should become the basis for further meetings, not only between academics representing various creeds but between wider circles of Jews and Orthodox Christians. For, while talks between Jews and Roman Catholic Christians have been going on for years, the dialogue between Athens and Jerusalem or between Constantinople and Jerusalem can hardly be said to have begun. In view of this situation, I must ask your indulgence if at the outset of this dialogue I do not present a paper in the technical sense of the word, but merely put forward a few thoughts which may perhaps be helpful in furthering the conversation which is to develop during the next two days. The very abundance of the material with its many strata and sources demand that the problems touched upon here should be considered in an appropriate manner by other bodies as well, in order that the variously conceived notions of Law, especially with reference to everyday practice, as manifested in contemporary Judaism and in Orthodox Christianity may be given adequate expression.

The fact that Law can be interpreted on so many different levels is a particularly serious matter for those of us who represent here Judaism. I assume that our position is more difficult than that of our Christian, and especially our Christian Orthodox friends taking part in this colloquium, since Judaism, by reason of its history, has not developed a standard interpretation which is recognized as binding by all its adherents to the same degree as have the Roman and Orthodox Churches. Against the background of a historical development which for nearly a thousand years has impeded the emergence of a generally accepted central authority in questions of faith and religious life, Judaism has been involved—at least since the High Middle Ages—in a process of social decentralization which is also reflected in various intellectual and religious aspects. For this reason, it is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to lay down a “normative” definition of “Law” in Jewish theology and ritual practice. At the best, one can only point to certain decisive factors which, throughout the centuries and amid the process of internal diversification, have remained relatively constant. However, the selection of such decisive principles and

the relative emphasis to be laid upon them remains a matter of individual or group decision and cannot be laid down as objective and mandatory for all.

Here a personal observation is needed. Traditionally the interpretation of the Law in Judaism is considered a matter for trained rabbis who are recognized as being competent in the application of the Law to real-life situations. This demonstrates once again the manner in which Law, as a concept, as a principle or as a system of principles, is inextricably intertwined with everyday life. The understanding and interpretation of Law is not decided upon by the theologian or the academic but by the rabbi, whose place is within the ambit of communal life on which he has such decisive influence. I shall hear the objection raised that this state of things has undergone a change in recent generations. Such an objection is justified insofar as it relates to the contemporary situation. But it is by no means decisively relevant to our, or rather to my concern with fundamental concepts. I therefore feel myself obliged to stress that, as an academic by profession and perhaps also by conviction, I cannot present any interpretation of Law which can be described as normative or generally recognized in present-day Judaism. What you shall hear is the attempt of a Jew who is striving *cum studio* to work out for himself an existential understanding of the significance of Law within the orbit of Jewish thought, this being offered with the limitations applicable to any purely personal point of view. My attempt aims at elucidating the fundamental concepts which appear, with more or less emphasis, among all those schools of thought in Judaism which can claim to be founded on Law. In accordance with the circumstances it must be taken into consideration that I shall sometimes take up a line of thought which will certainly be familiar to many participants in our colloquium. However, since I have been assigned the task of opening our meeting, it is inevitable that I should sometimes refer to matters already known when such reference can promote a dialogue between people in order to achieve a better understanding of each other's intellectual milieu. In the courses of our deliberations the gaps in our knowledge of one another will be more distinctly revealed, and in this way we should be able to clear the path towards a future discussion with a more definite target.

## II

I should like to preface my reflections on "Law in the Hebrew

Bible" or in the *Tanach*, with a few remarks. The division of the comprehensive subject "Law in Judaism" into two topics, one dealing with Law in the context of biblical thought and the other in the context of post-biblical Jewish thought, has, of course, a historical as well as a practical justification. Judaism, like any faith or religion, has, in the course of its history, undergone developments. Therefore it is quite legitimate to consider the phenomenon of Law from the two different aspects of the biblical and the post-biblical period. Thinkers and experts in the field are divided in a manner which parallels these developments. The Jewish Bible scholar, who is mainly concerned with the *Tanach*, usually has a good knowledge of rabbinic literature, but he will not regard himself as professionally qualified to undertake an analysis or a comprehensive presentation of how Law is to be understood in the context of rabbinic ideology. A similar line of demarcation separates the Old Testament from the New Testament scholar and both from the systematic theologian. It may perhaps be said that this boundary is more marked among Christians than among Jews—in consequence of the essentially different value placed upon the Old and the New Testament since the patristic period in formulating the Christian faith. The primary experience of Christians has its roots in Golgotha and is based on the Gospels, for which the Old Testament Scriptures are regarded as a preparation. Judaism, throughout all the stages of its later development, has its roots in the history of biblical Israel. The primeval era in which its prototype was formed is that of the Patriarchs and of Moses, of the Davidic dynasty and of the prophets whose activity spans the monarchical period. The cardinal points of Judaism are Sinai and Mount Zion, where God originally proclaimed "the Law" and from which it began to take effect. "The Law," or better "the *Torah*," according to Jewish ideas has been handed down in a continuous chain of tradition from Moses through Joshua, David, the Prophets Ezra and the Scribes to the Rabbis and hence to the present day. The Law given on Sinai lives and grows by this traditional interpretation, closely linked to the condition of the Jewish people at the various stages of its history.

For the Jewish thinker the terms "biblical" and "Jewish" or "post-biblical" do not describe two essentially different dimensions but two stages of development within a comprehensive system of ideas—stages which can indeed be differentiated from the historical point of view but, considered in light of the history

of thought, are so interrelated and connected that they must be grasped as a uniform whole. This continuum, viewed in its entirety, can be described either by the name and concept "Israel" or with equal justice as "Judaism." Hence we can perceive an internal unity which has characterized the historical existence of Judaism with its system of ideas from the beginning of the biblical epoch down to modern times. This unity expresses a conception which deviates in a marked degree from that prevailing in modern Bible studies and theology, in which a deep gulf has been opened between "biblical" or "Old Testament Israel" and "post-biblical" or "rabbinic Judaism." This bifurcation almost completely dominates modern Christian Bible studies, even though there is no agreement just where the boundary-line is to be drawn between the two allegedly quite different phases, for it is based on considerations of theological dogma rather than on scientific history.

Jewish thought, as expressed e.g. in the works of the contemporary Israeli historian J. Baer and of the Talmudic scholar E.E. Urbach,<sup>1</sup> (*The Sages—Their Concepts and Beliefs*, 1971), as well as in the writings of Jewish scholars in the Diaspora, comprehends rabbinic faith and the concept of Law inherent in it as a direct development of the biblical ideas prevalent in both pre- and post-exilic times. This development is not represented as uniform. Such a presentation would be disproved by the internal differences in the interpretation of Jewish faith and Law which are discernible already in the Bible as early as the post-exilic period. It is rather a matter of demonstrating how the rabbinical conception of Law which developed in Second Temple times, i.e. since the Hellenistic period, is rooted in the soil of biblical faith. There is no question of attempting to create a systematic Jewish theology. This would prove to be an unattainable goal in view of the unsystematic manner in which both biblical authors and rabbinical teachers expounded their ideas. It is rather an attempt to follow the internal development and the application of biblical concepts as they are reflected in the idea of Law in post-biblical literature without necessarily combining them into a system.

When I speak of the Jewish view, I refer mainly to notions which in Bible studies and theology are somewhat contemptuously described as "traditional," "uncritical," "pre-critical" and hence "apologetic." I would like to retain for the present the description

"traditional," but without accepting the deprecatory assessment implicit in the term. What characterizes this traditional position is the concept of Law as a constant unit in spite of simultaneous different interpretations. The developments which manifest themselves can be seen as taking place within an unbroken chain of tradition, which is to be comprehended as a unified whole. The concept of "law" and of the faith based upon it in the post-biblical period is not necessarily identical with that which prevailed in biblical and especially in pre-exilic times. But the basic strata and the germinating ideas can be observed, even in their mutations, as essentially unchanged. A hyperbolical saying of the rabbis lays down the rule that in the sphere of Law there are no innovations which affect basic principles. Every later reinterpretation of the Law by a sage or one of his disciples is, ideally, just a formulation of thoughts which are to be found latent in the *Torah* proclaimed by Moses, and hence in basic Jewish Law.

One more preliminary remark concerning the existential position of present-day Judaism, which is, of course, radically different from that of a Jew in the biblical, rabbinical or medieval epoch. I have spoken of a continuum in the essential nature of the Law—but how is this continuum to be applied to the ever-changing conditions of life for the individual and the community? Law must express the structure and the preconception of a living community and cannot, nay, must not, be permanent or stagnant. It must preserve a flexibility which renders it adaptable to new conditions and thus enables it to assure the vitality of a continually developing society. In this respect the Jewish people and their Law have been, so to speak, overtaken by history. The changes which arose out of altered living conditions, affecting also the Law, ceased centuries ago to be accepted by authority. Ever since the High Middle Ages Judaism has lacked any directive, commonly recognized authorities which could give the Law mandatory interpretation and codify new decisions which would be regarded as binding upon Jews everywhere. The decisive event in this development is not, as is generally stated, the destruction of the Second Temple in the year 70 A.D., nor the dissolution of the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court of justice, two or three generations after the fall of Jerusalem. Indeed these circumstances brought to a historical end any broadly recognized internal judicial authority in Judaism whose rulings possessed universal validity. But so long as Jewry continued to exist in only two great complexes, viz. in

Palestine and in Babylon, some homogeneity in the conception of Law was preserved, even after the destruction of the Temple and the loss of political sovereignty. An intensive communal life, almost completely isolated from the surrounding Gentile world, and a social structure based upon a framework erected by the teachers of the Law whose authority won voluntary recognition—these factors assured an interpretation of the Law which was subject to continual adjustment taking account of changing social and historical conditions but without involving any codified reforms in the Law.

A fundamentally different situation arose a few centuries later, when, in consequence to adverse historical factors, the Jewish people split up into an ever-increasing number of centers, each largely independent of the others, developing in various directions. This social and historical differentiation found expression in varying interpretations of the Law, in the very recognition of Law as the determining principle of Jewish life, and indeed in the whole attitude to Law as such. Amid this development in the sphere of Jewish life and faith we can observe a certain parallelism with processes which operated within Christianity. This parallelism manifests itself first in the formation of an Eastern vis-à-vis a Western Church, and then in further divergences based on geographical, linguistic, social and other conditions resulting in differing rituals and attitudes to Law.

The Jews living in Israel today, in the country where a largely new attempt is being made to recreate a unified Judaism, are faced with problems of the Jewish Law, which originated from the dispersion of the Jewish people: how can this Law, which for centuries has not undergone progressive and authoritative development, be adapted to a modern society whose life is determined by conditions quite different from those of the Jew in medieval or Roman times? Which of the traditions whereby the Law has been interpreted throughout the ages is to be accepted as authoritative today: the Oriental, which developed in Jewry of the Arab countries within the range of Islamic influence; the Western, which crystallized primarily in Central and Eastern Europe within the sphere of Christian domination; or the Sephardic tradition, that of the Spanish Jews, which is often identified with the Oriental but nevertheless differs from it at some points? Since in the State of Israel an independent Jewish society has once again to come to terms with Jewish Law, the problem there is much more acute

than among Diaspora Jewry, whose life-style and social structure has not been subjected to such a radical transformation. Jewish Law, insofar as it has developed during the last two millenia, has undergone its development under the conditions of a Diaspora community life where the community was not independent. This process has promoted an orientation towards social conditions which has little in common with that of a sovereign state. In searching for a comparable situation in which Jewish Law was formerly effective, we must perforce go back beyond the last two thousand years and look at the period of the Bible. In this way basic biblical Law acquires a present-day relevance, especially the concept of Law as presented in biblical literature of the post-exilic biblical period. We are thus transported back to an era which forms the background for the emerging internal divergency within Jewry which finally found its most radical expression in the separation of Christianity from Judaism.

This brings us once more to the question to which our colloquium is devoted—the differing conception of “Law” in the Jewish and Christian traditions. Mgr. Damaskinos has already referred to the fact that in considering this question one generally comes up against the bifurcation—in my opinion exaggerated—into two opposed and mutually exclusive ideas: Judaism is alleged to have developed, after the return from the Babylonian exile (i.e. since the end of the sixth or the middle of the fifth century B.C.), a religious outlook which has been labelled with the description “legalistic religion.” Thus, implicitly and also explicitly, we find a polarity exhibited as against Christianity, which demands a “Faith in Grace,” free of Law or liberated from the Law. Presented in this way, the dichotomy between Judaism and Christianity, which hardened after the destruction of the Second Temple and after the time of Paul, becomes an unbridgeable gulf. However, we know that such a crude bifurcation cannot be justified on historical or conceptual grounds. It is easy to understand that the polarization was readily employed in disputations and is still sometimes heard in discussions in which the object seemingly is not to understand the issues but rather to defeat one’s opponent by dogmatic argument. Living communities do not allow themselves to be entrapped in exclusive dogmatic slogans. Any attempt to reduce post-exilic Judaism to a mere “ceremonial Law” and to claim for Christianity an exclusive inheritance of the ethical faith of the Prophets, which was finally liberated from the Law by the mar-

tyrdom of Jesus, results in the reduction of the two main out-growths of biblical faith which developed separately through historical processes, to mere patterns and stereotypes. Social life without Law, i.e., without norms of conduct, is inconceivable. The early Christians knew this. The biblical prophets knew it before them; they took the "Law" for granted. Upon this basic assumption, they erected an "ethical attitude to faith" whereby the objective Law becomes more inward and hence gains the value of a personal obligation. The polarizing opposition of a "prophetic faith free from Law" which allegedly propagated itself in Christianity and a "religion of ceremonial law" which took its roots from the ideology of post-exilic Jewry and attained its full flowering in rabbinic Judaism must be characterized either as naive or as polemical, and therefore indefensible.

### III

We can now turn to the clarification of some ideas which are of decisive importance for our colloquium. I announced my presentation under the title "*Torah and Tanach*," not as "Law in the Old Testament." As is generally known, the Hebrew Bible, which alone is valid for Jews as Holy Writ, consists of *Torah*, *Nebim* (prophetic books) and *Ketubim* (paraleipomena/miscellaneous writings). Judaism, possessing no New Testament, cannot logically have any Old Testament either. More important is the concept of *Torah*, which I employ instead of the English Law, French *Loi*, or German *Gesetz*, all used to render the Greek word *Nomos*. All these terms are incorrect, or at least narrow and inadequate translations of the Hebrew word *Torah*. The error was perhaps started by the Greek translators of the Hebrew Bible, or else it must have originated from the time when the early Church wished deliberately to stress as clearly as possible the distinguishing marks between Christianity and rabbinic Judaism. *Nomos*, Law, *Loi*, *Gesetz*, were and are conceived as ideas which denote purely formal regulations, especially those of a ritual character, to which the life of the individual and of the community or society is subjected. They can quite easily be used to refer solely to the formal, almost mechanical element in the patterns of life. Whether intended or not—mostly of set purpose—these terms convey the impression of characterizing a religion which is satisfied with mere narrow-minded ceremonialism. This mistaken rendering has had momentous consequences. It was widely accepted as an adequate definition of the

difference between Jews and Christians—on the one side a *homo non religiosus*, on the other—or rather the—*homo religiosus*. A better understanding of the basic concept *Torah* and fewer polemical translations or interpretations could have avoided much bloodshed through debates and disputations, not merely *in abstractu*/figuratively/but also *realiter*/in actual fact/in the history of Jewry.

Within the context of Judaism *Torah* expresses a comprehensive reality in life. *Torah* aims at the formation of this all-embracing reality. *Torah* is instruction, lore and advice; it is concerned with the entire spectrum of human life as viewed by the individual and as viewed by society. *Torah* includes also Law, as I have already stressed—Law which is indispensably necessary for regulating human life. But *Torah* also covers a wider field. In the form of the Five Books of Moses it is a presentation of Israel's history from the creation of the world down to the Conquest of the Promised Land. In this presentation also laws are included, because according to biblical ideas they are fundamentally connected with history. Whatever history of men and their ideas is presented in the first four books of the Pentateuch with reference to Israel and Israel's relations with other peoples, is once again concisely adumbrated in the fifth book, which accordingly was given the alternative Hebrew title *Mishneh Torah*. It is thus identified as a recapitulation of the *Torah* in all its aspects, not merely as a recapitulation of the Law as suggests its Greek title *Deuteronomium*. There are undoubtedly differences between the literary formulations of the first four books and the fifth. These differences are especially stressed by modern Bible research and are, at least in part, attributable to differences in the time of their compilation or to discrepancies between the views of their compilers. But for our purposes they can be left out of account, since for us the essential thing is the basic concept of “instruction,” which underlies both formulations. I would like to add in parentheses that the Book of Chronicles might similarly be described as *Deutero-biblia*, or in Hebrew as *Mishneh-Miqra (Tanach)*. It can be regarded as an attempt to outline once again Israel's entire historical experience starting from at the very beginning the Creation, i.e. from Adam, whom the book mentions (1 Chronicle 1:1), to the return to the Land after the Babylonian exile, to which even the last word *weya'al*—let him go up—(2 Chronicle 36:43) refers. Once again we find in this recapitulation laws and regulations, some of them in

new formulations, as we would expect in view of the Jewish concept of *Torah* already explained.

The Jewish view of life is not, then, exhausted in *Nomos*—Law—but is essentially concentrated in the encounter between the people and their God throughout the course of history, which is guided by the divinely given Law. This Law, like the people itself, has its focal point in the Land of Israel with its social, political and agricultural peculiarities—to mention only a few of the most important aspects. The land of Israel is the ideal place in which the fulfillment of the Law can be most perfectly achieved in a duly constituted national commonwealth on the soil on which Israel's faith had its foundation.

I would like to summarize what has been said so far by considering a thesis of Martin Buber, who gave precedence over Law to Revelation and the experience of Revelation. He states that: "The *Torah* embraces laws, but *Torah* is not essentially law."<sup>2</sup> The first part of this utterance can be unreservedly endorsed; the second, however, expresses an anomistic interpretation of Judaism which is characteristic of Buber but not of the traditional conception of Judaism. Buber's disciple Nachum Glatzer comes much nearer to the latter in setting up his own thesis: "*Torah* is more than Law, but in Law there is *Torah*."<sup>3</sup>

*Torah* is more than Law, and according to the biblical view Law was not to be understood as a self-contained whole made up of mere ritual rules and precepts, but rather as a network of guidelines which together permeate the life of the Jew including what we would describe as his 'spiritual life.' This statement can be corroborated by a quantitative examination, of the Five Books of Moses, which constitute the *Torah par excellence*, and indeed the entire *Tanach*. The legal sections, in the technical sense of the word, represent only a relatively small part of the *Torah* and of the *Tanach*. These legal sections appear not as separate books but as parts of the whole text, integrated with the history of Israel and the world. In this way the relevance of *Torah*-Law to history and life under all conditions and circumstances is made evident. It appears that the author or editor of the Pentateuch, and likewise the authors or editors of the biblical books and of the whole collection which makes up the *Tanach*, deliberately refrained from drawing any boundary line between historical and legal literature. The manner in which the laws are distributed among the various books of the *Tanach* or the various elements of the Pentateuch is

not, of course, uniform. Books which are regarded as Wisdom Literature or as liturgical psalmody contain no laws at all. In the prophetic books as well laws appear only in the form of allusions or references to legal guidelines from which the individual or the people have strayed away in the practice of everyday life, thereby 'desecrating,' or as we would say nowadays 'secularizing' it. On the other hand, legal material is especially prominent in the Pentateuch. Here we are concerned partly with precepts which unmistakeably reflect the social and economic structure of a settled rural or urban population. These were certainly not conceived during the period of the wanderings in the desert, which is reported in the Pentateuch. Here, however, a further principle comes into play. Moses is regarded as Israel's typical and actually sole legislator in the biblical epoch. For this reason it was necessary to retroject the entire legislative system into the Mosaic period and to identify in that period historical events to which the laws could be related.

Even in the Pentateuch we find legal sections of unequal size distributed among the single books. Genesis contains only very few laws, mainly such as can be looked upon as binding upon mankind in general—the Seven Laws of the descendants of Noah—and are actually pre-Israelite in origin. Nevertheless, the precept of circumcision, which is of fundamental importance to the Jewish people, is introduced here (Genesis 17:9-14), and this in turn in direct connection with a 'historical' situation, viz. the circumcision of Ishmael and all the male members of Abraham's household, including, of course, Isaac (Genesis 21:4). This law is once again referred to later in the episode in which a political alliance between Shechem and the Israelites is made conditional upon the circumcision of the Shechemites (Genesis 34). More extensive are the collections of laws to be found in the Book of Exodus. These include detailed precepts for regulating various aspects of human life, such as family life, and the relation of the individual to the community in which he lives. They mention rules of conduct relating to clothing and food, to birth and death, to festivals and everyday occurrences. We find here not only technical statutes, but also included within the legal framework are directives which make righteousness a legal obligation, as well as love for one's neighbor and for God, and ethical behavior towards one's enemies. Here we also encounter some ritual laws: statutes relating to the sacrificial service, gifts due to the priests and to the Sanctuary, and

in particular laws of purity applicable to persons and their clothing, artifacts and dwellings. These prescriptions in turn are set in a historical context by a narrative introduction, which represents them as having been laid down during the period of the wanderings in the wilderness. The fifth book, Deuteronomy, is constructed in a similar manner. It is, as already mentioned, a recapitulation of material contained in the preceding four books. The historical connection and the existential ethical content are stressed here to the same degree as in the Book of Exodus.

It is against this background that we must view the laws of holiness which make up most of the Fourth Book, and of the Priestly Code which is identical with the Third Book, Leviticus. It is mainly on account of the precepts contained in these two books that the Jewish faith has been stigmatized and almost placed beyond the pale as *a religion of ceremonialism*, disparagingly contrasted with the faith of Christianity, which is represented as the supreme ethical achievement, and permeated with the love and knowledge of God. When Judaism and its faith are characterized in this way, Law and especially ceremonial Law is completely divorced—and surely not fortuitously—from its rightful place in life and in history. This isolation of ritual and the laws which regulate it from all other aspects of a lifestyle which is to have as its basis a faith-oriented morality, is decidedly un-Jewish.

Ritual and ritual laws are not regarded as an end in themselves but as means toward shaping a life in which man gives concrete expression to the fact that he perceives God in the affairs of every day. A framework of instruction is needed to support the ordered service of God; this is *Torah*, whereby man is to be guided in all his ways. Ceremony and ritual are thought of as bridges which can and should lead to a profound sense of meeting between man and God. Each ritual act contains in itself a religious value and is so characterized in the benediction which accompanies its performance. At the same time, ceremonies serve as a firm framework which helps man daily and hourly to be aware of his dependence on God.

The ceremonial laws also have their ideal primary *point d'appui* in historical situations. Closely associated with historical experiences of the nation, they endeavor to make certain one-time events the foundation for an ever newly experienced identification with Israel's history, thereby to attain a reactivated connection with the God of Israel Who works His will in history. As a typical

example of this close ideological association of law with history one can cite the episode of the man who gathered wood on the Sabbath for which offense he was condemned to death by Moses (Numbers 15:32-36). Doubt has been cast upon the historicity of this event, and rightly so. Here, however, we are concerned not with the question of its factual basis but with the circumstance that by the aid of this story the command to rest on the Sabbath is given a foundation in history, and in the life of the people (cf. Deuteronomy 5:12-15), thus differing from the creation story where it is derived from the act of the Creator who rested from His work on the seventh day (Genesis 2:1-2, cf. Exodus 20:8-11; 31:12-17 *et al.*).

*Torah* directs the faith of the individual and of the community while at the same time existentially controlling their conduct. A life-style based on *Torah* protects the people from religious and social anarchy. *Torah* is not the expression of a rigid legalism, but the revealed Divine answer to man's call. It is the testimony of God's covenant with Israel. To this extent, *Torah*-Law circumscribes the details of Jewish self-awareness, since it outlines Israel's duty to be a holy nation, separate and differentiated from other nations. The real meaning of *Torah*-Law lies in the effort to endow, by means of *Torah*, the life of the individual, the nation, and the world with shape and order.

From this biblical concept is developed the rabbinic teaching of Law as *Halachah*, i.e. as a system of directives and regulations which impress their mark on the life-style of the Jew and on the life-style of the Jewish community. The system goes far beyond what is explicitly laid down in the Bible. And yet it has its roots in the Bible. Its ramifications are based on an interpretation the beginnings of which we find already in the post-exilic books of the Bible such as Ezra and Nehemiah, but which was more perfectly developed in the post-biblical period. Interpretation was especially employed to adapt the biblical *Torah* to the very different social structure of Jewry in rabbinic times. A legal basis had to be given to the new forms of the religious and sociological institutions which gave Jewry the strength to preserve its own special character both as a nation and as religious community. Moses Hess summed up this central aspect of Jewish collective consciousness in his pithy saying: Israel serves God in its institutions. It must be stressed that this development of *Torah* does not in any way impair man's personal connection with God. Life based

upon *Torah* and the Law contained therein is the tangible expression of submission—of “belonging” to the Divine Law-giver. God’s covenant with His people is expressed in this sense of “belonging amid changes,” in the obligations imposed upon the individual Jew and his community, who thus answer the demand that Israel should be a “holy nation.”

This idea is summarized in the declaration: “Ye shall be Mine own treasure from among all peoples” (Exodus 19:5), which is immediately followed up by the words: “*we’atem tihyu li mamelechet kohanim*” (Exodus 19:6). The references found in most translations to “a kingdom of priests” tends to confirm the reader in the widespread view that the ceremonial and legal character of Judaism is held up as an ideal. “Priests,” like “rabbis, Pharisees and Scribes” suggest a negative attitude, since they immediately conjure up such notions as subtle casuistry, hairsplitting and the like. There can, however, be no doubt that this translation and the hostile definition of Judaism connected with it, present the Jewish faith in an entirely false light. Judaism has never regarded priests or the priestly status as an ideal which one should strive to emulate. In biblical Israel the priesthood, distinguished by its ‘institutional charisma,’ performed a clearly defined function in the Temple service and in certain other cultic and religious fields, e.g., in questions of hygiene and the treatment of diseases. But the main figures in biblical society are the king and the prophet; they are marked by a ‘personal charisma’ (which in the Davidic dynasty indeed is regarded as hereditary). A man like David could be represented as an ideal type (1 Samuel 16:18), and so could the inspired prophet, as persons who most perfectly embodied the true faith in Yahweh. Never is a priest so presented. The social structure to which Israel should aspire, and which is presented in the verse quoted above (Exodus 19:6) as a goal of endeavor, is that of a ‘dedicated monarchy’ based upon *Torah*-Law.

It is this holiness founded upon *Torah*-Law that is praised and extolled in the Jewish daily morning prayer: “Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast hallowed us by Thy commandments and hast commanded us to occupy ourselves by (learning to understand) the words of the *Torah*.” *Torah* assumes everlasting life; it is therefore no mere ceremonial law. Observance of the rules and precepts contained in the *Torah* is regarded as a precondition for spiritual life and for the individual’s and the community’s hopes of a future life. This view is clearly expressed

in the blessing which the member of the congregation appointed to witness the reading from the *Torah* in the Synagogue service concludes the reading: "Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast given us the true *Torah* and thereby hast planted eternal life among us." God's covenant with His people consists of the Law which directs the life of the individual and of the community. By this direction it safeguards the connection with God which in turn offers the prospect of everlasting life.

Here we find two ideas in the Jewish concept of Law which appear to be paradoxical but in reality are complementary. I have already indicated the close connection with history which characterizes the Law and the precepts, the *Torah* having been revealed to Israel in a definite historical situation. But this situation depicted primarily in the historical sections of the second and fifth books of Moses, is built into the wider framework of the Pentateuch which presents the history of Israel from the Creation of the world until the Conquest of the Land. In this way, *Torah*-Law is given a dimension extending beyond historical time and space. It attains a cosmic and universal validity. Thus the conception of Law becomes an integral part of Creation, although its revelation did not take place until the days of Moses. Just as Creation and the era of the Patriarchs, so also the time of Moses is regarded as a period stretching beyond the confines of history. All the experiences which originated in that time and space, all the enactments connected with it or derived from it, were not given in time or limited by time, but are considered as 'primeval' and as of eternal duration. Everything later is interpretation.

I said already that there can be no doubt that a great number of the laws contained in the Pentateuch do not originate from the wilderness and cannot be attributed to Moses. Many reflect the conditions of an agricultural people settled on the land and of a social structure which could have developed only during the centuries following the conquest of Canaan. However, at present, we are not concerned with the historical accuracy of the traditions but rather with the significance of the fact that the giving of the law was set in the earliest period of Israel's history. That epoch was looked upon as prefiguring all future time. Whatever happened then was regarded as binding upon later generations. That formative period culminated in Moses, the only man to maintain direct contact with God, who beheld Him "face to face" (Exodus 33:11;

Deuteronomy 34:10), who saw Him unmistakeably and not in visions and engaged in a direct dialogue with Him (Numbers 12:7-8). The law proclaimed through the agency of Moses should enable the nation to realize their covenant with God at any time.

The realization of the covenant manifests itself in man's life-cycle, not only in the supreme achievements or transcendental experiences of faith but continuously throughout the course of his daily actions. This is why many laws that were further developed and crystallized in rabbinical *Halachah* are concerned more with practical matters which influence the rhythm of life than with ritual in the narrower sense of the word. The precepts of the *Torah* regulate conduct and work, weekdays and festivals. They are concerned with agriculture and trade, law court procedure and hygiene. *Torah* is essentially social law, determining the relations between man and his fellow, as also between man and God, while at the same time regulating the life of the community. For example, through the ordinances of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years it aims at avoiding ostentatious wealth and abject poverty without going to extremes of utopian ideology which cannot be realized in this world. The Law does not aim at an ideal constitution of society but remains always in close touch with existing conditions. It does not try radically to eliminate poverty and wealth, slavery and slave-ownership, but strives to keep them within tolerable limits. Also in other parts of the Bible, especially in the prophetic literature, we find the affirmation of principles which should govern a real and therefore *a priori* not an ideal social life under any historical conditions that have been or could be experienced and which is distinguished by Law. The prophets unreservedly acknowledge the necessity for an ordered social structure. Their censure is directed against lawlessness and anarchy in religious as well as in political and social life. Isaiah interprets anarchy and political turmoil as a punishment for the injustice and misdeeds by which the nation has proved disloyal to the divinely given Law (Isaiah 3). The prophets wished to see in Israel the "holy seed" (Isaiah 6:13; cf. Ezra 9:2) from which could blossom forth the "holy nation" mentioned in the passage spoken at Sinai (Exodus 19:5-6).

In the post-biblical period, when Israel no longer possessed its own state or polity, there came into being the parallel or substitute concept of the *Kehillah Kedoshah*, the "Holy Congregation," a community sanctified by its adherence to the Divine

*Torah*-Law. The *Kehillah Kedoshah*—the “Holy Congregation”—is based on principles identical with those of the biblical “Holy Nation.” Like the latter, it adopts as its guideline the declaration with which Israel accepted the Law on Sinai—“*na’aseh we nishma*” (Exodus 24:7), which may be somewhat freely rendered: “We shall do [obediently] what we hear.” This verse was interpreted by the rabbis as indicating readiness to accept the Law unreservedly, intuitively and with complete self-surrender. It implies that “doing,” i.e. practice, was given priority over the “word,” i.e. theory. Society is founded upon practice. Practice cannot always flow from abstract contemplation. Contemplation is often a factor impeding action. The person who lives in an ordered society must act and must submit to a binding, authoritative code of conduct, without in every case being able or willing to give reasons for his action, without seeking a rational basis or waiting for a divine call, a special personal command to renew his activity. Law involves compulsion and directives whose binding force cannot be made dependent upon ‘understanding’ and *ad hoc* acceptance. The possibility of an inner submission to the Law remains always open and is always to be desired, but this can only grow out of practical obedience, the “*na’aseh we-nishma*” of the Bible.

To sum up, I would say: *Torah* and Law, as understood in the Hebrew Bible and in Judaism, are the all-embracing bulwarks which preserve the connection between God and man, between man and man, between the center of society and its periphery. To belong to God means to obey His ordinances, which find their expression in social life. “Seeking God” is equated by the prophet Amos with “seeking the good and the right” which must determine the ordering of society. Both lead to “Life”: “*dirshuni wichyu*”—“Seek ye Me, and Live” (Amos 5:4) and “*dirshu wichyu*”—“Seek good that ye may live” (Amos 5:14). This is how Israel’s ‘nomism’ is to be interpreted.

Finally, let me refer once more to the fact that inner illumination can come from the Law which has fallen into disrepute as ‘mere externalism.’ I would like to bring out this point by quoting a saying attributed to a Hassidic master whose name, alas, is unknown to me. It has to do with a key passage in the Bible—the *Shema*—which was later interpreted as a command to the Jew to remind himself every day of the ever-present relevance of the Law by putting on phylacteries. The rabbi asked: “Why does the *Torah* say—‘These words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon

thy heart' (Deuteronomy 6:6). Would it not be more fitting to say '*In* thy heart?" To which he replies: "A person can submit himself to the Law and obey it. But he can only lay it *upon* his heart. With God's grace it will then also enter *into* his heart and penetrate his being." So—Law can and should make way for faith and lead to faith.

### Summary Minutes

Mgr. Damaskinos, thanking Professor Talmon, said that he had highlighted the dynamic renewal inherent in Judaism. A similar predominance of the spirit over the letter also characterized Orthodox Christianity.

There followed a discussion in which Professor Talmon declared that Biblical Judaism was not a monolithic structure as might be suggested by the well defined forms it had taken during the dispersion period. Nothing in Judaism admitted the notion of "yoke of the Law" since Jews spoke of *Simchat haTorah*, the rejoicing in the Torah, a grace granted by God. He replied to questions about the relationship between the practice of Torah and the idea of Redemption, noting that in rabbinic Judaism two trends prevailed, one affirming the eternity of the Law upon the coming of the Messiah, the other stating the contrary. Professor Talmon said that Jews believed that during the "latter days" peace would reign and each people would walk along the path of its own God. The multiplicity of religions would thus be maintained, but there would be harmonious coexistence instead of acrimonious disputations; an amelioration of history and not an abrogation of history.

At the afternoon meeting of the same day, Professor Schmid delivered his paper, "A Roman Catholic View of the Law."



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## **TOWARDS THE GREAT AND HOLY COUNCIL**

After a long period of pan-Orthodox conciliar inactivity, the Orthodox Church is moving towards the convocation of its 'Great and Holy Council.' Although this Council is being summoned as ecumenical, when it came to choosing between the two traditional terms, 'ecumenical council' and 'great and holy council of the Orthodox Church,' the second of the two was finally, and rightly, preferred, as it was thus that the early church councils, convened as ecumenical, normally called themselves. While in the history of the Church, councils have been summoned as 'ecumenical,' their ecumenicity was a feature attributed to them, finally, by a common accord of the faithful (*consensus fidelium*). So it came about that councils convened as ecumenical were recognized only as local, in the Church's judgment, and vice versa. For instance, the Council of Sardica (A.D. 343), was meant to be ecumenical, but turned out to be local; the same thing happened at Rimini in 359. On the other hand, there is the Council of Constantinople in 381, called by the Emperor Theodosios as a council of the eastern portion of the Empire and recognized as ecumenical 150 years later by the Fourth Ecumenical Council.<sup>1</sup>

So it is that a council is not necessarily ecumenical because certain conditions laid down by the Early Church in the course of its history have been observed. There is no, so to speak, absolute yardstick by which to judge whether a council is ecumenical or not. The main criterion is its truth, that is, its soteriological importance for the faithful, and that cannot be ascertained beforehand.

Setting aside the history of church councils, we shall merely note that they were eventually called by the Ecumenical Patriarchate.<sup>2</sup> Thus, by common agreement with the heads of the local Orthodox Churches, the late Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras convened the First Pan-Orthodox Conference in Rhodes in 1961, with a view to laying down the themes of the Council. These themes are too well-known to be mentioned here; they cover virtually the whole spectrum of Orthodox doctrine, practice and life, and come under eight headings,<sup>3</sup> without any particular theological or ecclesiological order.

My paper deals with the preparation for the Great and Holy Council in two stages: one, from the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference to the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference; two, from the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference to the present day – Summing-up, reflections and prospects.

### **From the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference to the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference.**

The Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference, held from 8-15 June 1968 at the Chambésy (Geneva) Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, is an important landmark in the preparation of the Council. It selected six sub-themes from the catalogue of Rhodes, viz., as follows:

1. From Chapter I “Faith and Doctrine,” under heading B: The Sources of Divine Revelation:
  - (a) Holy Scripture:
    1. Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture.
    2. Authority in the Orthodox Church of the Old Testament books known as *Anaginoskomena*.
    3. Critical edition of the Byzantine text of the New Testament.
  - (b) Sacred Tradition (definition of its meaning and range).
2. From Chapter II “Divine Worship,” under heading C: Full participation by the laity in the worship and life of the Church.
3. From Chapter III “Church Government and Order,” under heading E: Adaptation of the ecclesiastical ordinances regarding fasting, to meet present-day needs.
4. From the same chapter, under heading G: Impediments to marriage. A study of the present-day practice in the various local Churches and of the ecclesiastical procedure employed; also a means of securing, as far as possible, uniformity of practice on this matter throughout the whole of the Orthodox Church.
5. From the same chapter, under heading I: The Calendar question. A study relating the question to the decision of the First Ecumenical Council concerning Easter and seeking a way to re-establish a common practice among the Churches.
6. From Chapter VII “Theological issues,” under heading A: Economy in the Orthodox Church.
  - (a) Meaning of the terms *akrībeia* and *oikonomia* in the Orthodox Church.

(b) "*Oikonomia*" (Economy):

1. In the sacraments within the Church and outside it.
2. In the reception of heretics and schismatics by the Orthodox Church (some by baptism, some by anointing with Holy Chrism, some by a fresh confession of faith, some by a special form of prayer).

As well as selecting these themes, the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference laid down the process by which these were to be worked over and submitted to the future Pan-Orthodox Council, and also set up the machinery for this process. It was decided that each of the six themes should be entrusted to one or more local Churches for study and reporting on. Thus the first theme, which deals with the sources of Revelation, went to the Church of Constantinople; the second, on lay participation, to the Church of Bulgaria; the third, on fasting, to the Serbian Church; the fourth, on impediments to marriage, to both the Russian and the Greek Churches; the fifth, on the Easter tables, likewise; while the sixth, on "economy," went to the Church of Rumania.<sup>4</sup>

After allotting these themes, the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference decided to set up an Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission to coordinate and work on the various studies given (then and in the future) to the local Churches, and to formulate a single Orthodox standpoint on each of the themes. The Commission consisted of one ordained representative for each of the local Churches, assisted by an ordained or lay theologian as councilor. The Secretariat for the Preparation of the Council, another decision taken by the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference, was to have as its headquarters the Chambésy Orthodox Center of the Ecumencial Patriarchate.

The procedure for preparing the Council was to be as follows: The local Churches, mandated by the Conference to take a first serious look at the six chosen themes, were to be allowed six months to draft their report, which the Secretariat would then dispatch to the Churches. Following that, the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission would meet to formulate a single Orthodox standpoint on each of the chosen themes.

Once this was done by the Preparatory Commission, its president was to inform the Ecumenical Patriarch that its task had duly been carried out. The Patriarch, after consultation with the heads of the local Churches, would convene the Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference. The Commission's drafts were to be transmitted

to the local Churches for their information.

The Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference was to review and examine the Preparatory Commission's drafts, and to produce a final dossier on each of the themes, to be remitted by the Ecumenical Patriarch to the future Great and Holy Council, being deposited in the archives of the proper bureau.<sup>5</sup>

Some two years after the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference did its work at Chambésy, that is to say on 16 July 1970, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate met and decided to propose to the other Orthodox Churches to summon the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission for the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. The Commission met from 15-28 July 1971, at Chambésy.

During this meeting, the Commission reached a two-fold conclusion. First, it completed its mandate to gather a corpus of material on the six themes. Of this, the integral text of the draft reports was published by the Secretariat, in Greek,<sup>6</sup> then, also in Greek, in a booklet containing the minutes of the Inter-Orthodox Commission.<sup>7</sup> The Secretariat also provided for a Russian edition of these documents,<sup>8</sup> and for their appearance in French (minus the draft on the first theme—Divine Revelation and salvation),<sup>9</sup> English,<sup>10</sup> Italian<sup>11</sup> and partially in German.<sup>12</sup>

Second, this Commission unanimously recommended that the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference revise the catalogue of themes drawn up by the First Pan-Orthodox Conference of Rhodes (1961), and, finally, expressed to the Ecumenical Patriarch the wish that, after consulting the heads of the local Churches, he should convene the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference for the first half of June 1972.<sup>13</sup>

However, taking into account the draft reports of the Commission, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, presided over by the late Patriarch Athenagoras, concluded that this call for a rapid convocation of the Preconciliar Conference was, in practice, out of the question.<sup>14</sup> As announced to the local Orthodox Churches and, later, to the press (16 May 1972) by the head of the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Council, the Ecumenical Patriarchate decided that the catalogue of themes of Rhodes needed some preparatory work by the local Churches, and that this work could not be done prior to the brief July 1972 deadline. Therefore the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference would have to be summoned later. There was, however, confidence that

the interim would be profitable, not only because it would give the ecclesiastical authorities time for a conscientious study of the themes of the Great Council, but also because they would have an opportunity of expressing the opinion of Orthodox theologians in general—a representative opinion, in conformity with the age-old custom of the Orthodox Church, of the overall judgment of the Orthodox faithful believers.

This postponement turned out, in fact, to be a milestone in the progress of the Orthodox Church towards the Great Council. The dimensions of the task, begun with such enthusiasm, sank in, in all their breadth and with all their inherent difficulties. Contacts between theologians and local Churches continued, intensified and broadened in an attempt to awaken a full consciousness of what the Council entails. These may, briefly, be listed as follows:

(1) From 26-31 December 1972, an unofficial meeting of Orthodox theologians was held at Chambésy under the aegis of the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Council.<sup>15</sup> Having also reached the conclusion that the prescribed catalogue of themes corresponded neither to a norm of inner coherence, nor even to the demands placed upon the Church by the times and the needs of the faithful, they proceeded to draw up a new list of themes.

(2) From 22-28 September 1973, the head of the Secretariat visited the Patriarchate of Rumania at its behest, to inform the various departments of the Church of Rumania on progress towards the Council, and to exchange views and information on its prospects.<sup>16</sup>

(3) From 9-13 October 1973, the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Council organized an unofficial consultation for a group of theologians at the Orthodox Academy of Crete; its main task was to pinpoint the most urgent problems met within the life of the Orthodox Church and arising, according to the participants, out of the immediate experience of Orthodox believers today. They could be summed up as follows: "The Church and the world, or the assumption of the world by the Church and the danger of its becoming secularized."<sup>17</sup>

(4) From 13-18 October 1974, the head of the Secretariat, at the invitation of His Beatitude Mgr. German, Patriarch of the Serbs, visited the Patriarchate of Serbia. During this visit, a) the need for awakening a consciousness of the necessity of convening the Great Council was stressed; b) satisfaction was expressed regarding the necessarily slow, but steady and conscientious pre-

paration of the Council, inasmuch as it affords a possibility of doing the preliminary work in depth, so as to galvanize the faithful; c) it was said that convening a Council could be justified on theological grounds, even if it were only to solve one painful question; d) the particular gravity of the themes relating to the ecclesiological relations of the Orthodox Church with the other Churches was stressed, as was the fact that these questions can only be solved through a combined pan-Orthodox effort; finally, it was observed that throughout the world there exists a yearning for a conciliar message of salvation, according to the crisis of the moment, so that Orthodoxy is faced today with an important mission.<sup>18</sup>

(5) From 26 April to 31 May 1976, all the local Orthodox Churches were visited, one after the other, by the Special Envoy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, His Eminence the Senior Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, who was accompanied by the head of the Secretariat for preparing the Council, and by the Very Reverend and Protopresbyter George Tsetsis. This had as its happy outcome the summoning of the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference.<sup>19</sup>

It is not our purpose here to dwell on the abundant theological literature produced on the subject of the Council, nor on the spiritual stirring observed notably in Orthodox circles, many of which were dutifully provoked by the Secretariat. At the time, their discordant chorus appeared, hardly a rare phenomenon in such cases of disagreement, to put a brake on the direct progress towards the Council. But in fact, they should be regarded as affording precious guidance to the Orthodox Church on its still difficult path towards the Council.<sup>20</sup>

We shall also forego summarizing the opinions expressed on the six special themes designated at Chambésy in 1968, and their elaboration in 1971 by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission. An overall picture of these opinions has been submitted by us to the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference.<sup>21</sup>

In closing this first part of our paper, we would like simply to express a doubt as to whether the theological literature grown up around the Council really reflects the corresponding participation of wider Church circles, the importance of which will depend on its saving power or, in other words, on the ability of the Orthodox Church to strengthen the belief of those to whom it addresses itself, that it is true to itself, as the living Church, and that it is able to clothe the Evangelical message with the garment

of history, without any hiatus in historical continuity. The importance of this event will likewise depend on whether the Orthodox Church thereby proves itself worthy of its name, its tradition, its calling, and its wider significance for the whole of the modern Christian world.

### **From the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference to the present day – Summing-up, reflections and prospects.**

In compliance with the unanimous decision of the whole Orthodox Church, the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference was convened by His Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Demetrios, in accordance with the ecclesiastic order, at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambésy, Geneva; the work of the Conference was terminated on 28 November.

Participating in this Conference were the delegations of all the local Orthodox Churches, except the Georgian Church, which could not come for technical reasons. The purpose of the Conference was to further the preparation of the Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church. In the perspective of the convocation of the Council in a possibly short time, and in compliance with the decision taken earlier on a pan-Orthodox level, and taking into account the result of the pan-Orthodox deliberations, the agenda of the Conference included the following points: (a) review of the catalogue of themes for the Great and Holy Council; (b) consideration of the methodology of the preparations for the Council concerning its themes; (c) general review and evaluation of the relations and dialogues of the Orthodox Church with other Christian churches and confessions, and with the World Council of Churches, and (d) discussion on the common celebration of Easter by all Christians on a fixed Sunday.

With regard to its first theme, the Preconciliar Conference unanimously decided that the Great and Holy Council should deal with ten themes: 1) the Orthodox Diaspora; 2) autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed; 3) autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed; 4) diptychs; 5) the question of a common calendar; 6) impediments to marriage; 7) adaptation of the ecclesiological ordinances regarding fasting; 8) relations of the Orthodox Church with the rest of the Christian world; 9) Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement; and the 10) contribution of the local Orthodox Churches to the triumph of the Christian ideals of peace, freedom, fraternity and charity.

among peoples, and to the elimination of racial discrimination.

As regards these themes, we would like to make the following observations.

The postponement of the convocation of the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference turned out to be truly providential, if one considers the amount of preliminary work done in depth to galvanize the faithful, and that this work led the Church to crystallize the most serious of its conciliar, vital problems. In this way, it has followed the advice of the patriarchal and synodical letter sent by the Ecumenical Patriarch, which specified that the catalogue of themes, "both in its content and in its outreach should correspond to the basic needs of our Orthodox Church, and lead to a shortening of the process for convening the Great and Holy Council."

Since the faithful flock of the Church are expecting exceptional spiritual help from the Great and Holy Council — inasmuch as it should be a major historical event for the Church, possibly even for mankind, and a privilege of our generation — it has been considered judicious, on the Pan-Orthodox level, to draw up a catalogue of those themes which gravely occupy the Church. Themes important for the life of the Church and its smooth running, not themes the solution of which would hardly cause a ripple on the surface of its life, but merely be set down in the text containing the decisions. After a while, apart from a few specialists, nobody would know the decisions, let alone the themes of the Council—a Council mentioned, possibly, in just a few specialized manuals of church history.

A notable trait is the unanimous wish to spare the Council the task of dealing with all the themes listed under the heading "Faith and Doctrine" in the catalogue of Rhodes. Doctrinal themes shaking Orthodoxy, and leading the faithful flock into heresy, such as, in the past, over the Trinity, Christ's nature and icons, do not, I believe, trouble the Orthodox faithful today,<sup>22</sup> observes Prof. G. Galitis. George Wagner, Bishop of Eudokias, agrees with him in maintaining that there exist no isolated dogmatic themes today capable of exciting the same interest as did certain ones during the times of the ecumenical councils.<sup>23</sup>

We feel we ought to mention here the near-unanimity of opinion and reaction among the Orthodox theologians over the document on Sacred Tradition produced by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission on the Great and Holy Council in 1971. In

their opinion, it would be futile and maybe risky to have the Council take a decision on a theme which threatens the Orthodox Church today neither with heresy nor with schism. Nor would ancient conciliar practice uphold such a step. Why should such a thing occur today? Apart from a handful of dogmatic theologians, particularly interested in that theme, are there any believers feeling the need for such a formulation? Has an Ecumenical Council ever been convened to solve theological questions unless the people of the Church have shown some prior interest in them – whereas, in this case, they are perhaps utterly ignorant of their very existence? Throughout the first eight centuries, ecumenical councils were called “in dire need and for good reason” to solve problems that had matured and were truly a thorn in the side of the Church. The doctrinal definitions of the first creeds are anything but cold, rational forms of conciliar statement, but a living, glorifying, hymned expression of faith, based on the baptismal formulae in use in the various churches. Taking them into account, the late Professor Panagiotes Trempelas recommends<sup>24</sup> the avoidance of a complete re-statement of doctrine, necessarily prolix and “in imitation of the decrees of the new Vatican Council,” and preference given instead to our own ancient, shorter, more concise and limpid form of statement. Sacred Tradition, he continues, “contains, notably in the *Consensum Patrum*, the definitions of the Ecumenical Councils, ancient liturgical practices and the ancient creeds in vigor.” Likewise Professors Panagiotes Bratsiotes, Panagiotes Trempelas, Konstantinos Mouratides, Angelos Theodorou and Nicholas Bratsiotes, in their memorandum to the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece,<sup>25</sup> point out that “it is meaningless for Orthodox Councils to busy themselves with theoretical problems of no import and of no immediate relevance for the Holy Church of Christ militant in the world.”

On the Pan-Orthodox level, theological doubts were expressed on the themes grouped together under the heading “Divine Worship” of the catalogue of Rhodes. None of them were retained on the Council’s agenda. This was because the Orthodox Church has no basic need of a liturgical reform. Of course, to stay alive, liturgical life is constantly in need of new impulses. In the history of Eastern liturgics, these were always given by one or the other spiritual center, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, or the convent of St. Sabbas near Jerusalem, the monastery at Studium, or the Great Church in Constantinople. The ordinal

of these centers was taken as a model by the other churches. No Ecumenical Council has ever interfered 'from above' with the live course of liturgical history. Why must we adopt new methods today?<sup>26</sup> The liturgical revival, so long as it does not desacramentalize the sacraments, is not at loggerheads with tradition, provided, of course, it does not break up the continuity of the handing-down of Truth.

The gravest and most urgent problems listed on the agenda are seen to be those related to inter-Orthodox unity and figuring in the catalogue of Rhodes under the heading "Relations of Orthodox Churches with One Another"; these are: 1) Orthodox diaspora, 2) autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed, and 3) autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed.

The judgment of history upon the Council under preparation will depend on the Pan-Orthodox solving of these questions upon the basis of sound Orthodox ecclesiological and canonical criteria.

Also of major importance are those themes on the Council's agenda which deal with the relationship of the Orthodox Church to the rest of the Christian world, and that of Orthodoxy to the Ecumenical Movement.

The gravity of these questions can be seen from the fact that the First Preconciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference made a complete review of the evolution of the relations and dialogues of the Orthodox Church with the other Christian churches and confessions, as well as with the World Council of Churches. It was decided that "the theological dialogues started between the Orthodox Church and the Anglican Church, the Old Catholic Church, and the Ancient Oriental Churches are to be furthered, with greater emphasis on the dialogue with the Ancient Oriental Churches, with Christian unity as their main target," and that "the Inter-Orthodox Technical Commission for dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church, having been established, should begin functioning as soon as possible."<sup>27</sup>

Putting this decision into practice, the Inter-Orthodox Technical Commission of Theologians met three times at the Chambésy Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (firstly 21-24 July 1977; secondly 14-18 November, also in 1977, and thirdly 25-27 June 1978). Between the second and third meetings, a meeting was held in Rome (29 March-1 April 1978) of the Joint Coordinating Group between the two Technical Commissions of

theologians to prepare the theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Church. In this manner, the technical side of preparing the theological work was carried out, so that the official theological dialogue between the two churches could be begun as soon as possible.

The Conference also determined that

given that the decision of the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference to prepare on a local Church level dialogue with the Lutherans had led to satisfactory progress, thanks to a number of individual studies and unofficial theological encounters at university level, an Inter-Orthodox Commission for theological dialogue with the Lutherans should be set up on similar lines to those existing for dialogue with the other Churches.

We are happy to be able to inform you that this Commission has been formed. On its side, the World Lutheran Federation has summoned a meeting at Chambésy during 1-4 May 1978, following a visit of representatives of the Federation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate during 13-16 March 1978.<sup>28</sup>

In the area of Orthodox commitment in the world, the Conference resolved that,

expressing the wish of the Orthodox Church to work for inter-religious understanding and cooperation, and through it for the liquidation of any kind of fanaticism, for the reconciliation of peoples, and for the triumph of freedom and peace in the world to the benefit of mankind, whatever his race or religion, the Conference resolves that the Orthodox Church should cooperate in this task with the non-Christian religions.

Concerning Orthodox involvement in the Ecumenical Movement, the Conference stated that,

the Orthodox Church, continuing its traditional role of pioneer in the formation and development of the Ecumenical Movement as a founding member of the World Council of Churches, is to strengthen its organisational contribution to the Council and, without cooperating less in or contributing less to the horizontal dimension, should pay special attention to strengthening the vertical dimension, i.e., the theology of Church unity.

To serve this purpose, it is considered necessary for a fair number of Orthodox theologians to be admitted on the high-ranking staff of the World Council of Churches, the Faith and Order Department in particular, so that Orthodox theological and ecclesiological opinions may find their proper place during the drawing up of WCC documents.

As for the relationship of the Orthodox to other Christian churches, one should note the ecclesiological importance attached by the Orthodox Church to the bilateral dialogues, without necessarily underestimating the multilateral conversations being held within the World Council of Churches.

Characteristic interest was aroused among non-Orthodox by the following extract of the draft report on Economy, prepared by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission:

It therefore follows that our Holy Orthodox Church, conscious of the significance and importance of the present-day structures of Christianity, not only recognizes – though being herself the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church – the ontological existence of all these Christian Churches and Confessions, but also positively believes that all her relationships with them are founded on the quickest and most objective clarification possible of the whole ecclesiological question and of their doctrinal teaching on sacraments, grace, ministry and the apostolic succession.<sup>29</sup>

“What does this mean?” certain non-Orthodox theologians are asking themselves. On what grounds does the Orthodox Church see herself as the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and how, consequently, does she conceive her relationship to the other Churches? What is the ecclesiological criterion for distinguishing, moreover, between churches and confessions, both in the Rhodes catalogue and in the above statement of the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission?

In speaking of ‘churches’ outside the Orthodox Church, how can one speak of “One, Holy, . . . Church” without falling into contradiction? In other words, are we not justifying the existence of many churches alongside the One, possibly even their separation, by granting them an amnesty and considering the Orthodox Church simply as one of several ‘confessional churches’? While in current speech we may abuse the term, we do not by any means identify the ‘churches’ with the One Church, by adhering to theories such as ‘branch theory’ or ‘comprehensiveness’ unacceptable to the Orthodox conscience.<sup>30</sup>

In all events, can one particular Church, when identifying its limits with those of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, accept a similar self-identification on the part of other churches without relativizing its own continuity and logicality?

What is, finally, the ecclesiological basis for the Orthodox to

maintain efforts at unity with other churches confessing the same faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Redeemer of the world?

These are exceptionally delicate and imperative questions, leading up to a qualified re-evaluation of our positions. Personally, I believe that the existence of a church outside the Church, in the full sense of the word, is a recognizable possibility in those areas where unity of faith is perceived, both in terms of the ancient creeds of the Ecumenical Councils and of unbroken apostolic succession with respect to this faith.

Concerning the fourth point of the agenda, i.e., "Common Celebration of the Easter by all Christians on a Fixed Sunday," the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference decided that:

Taking into account, on the one hand, the wish in the Orthodox Church for a common celebration of Easter by all Christians, and, on the other hand, the pastoral difficulties prevalent in certain local Churches, as well as the necessity of considering the pastoral needs of Orthodox pastors in the West, a balanced approach to the question without any haste in the presenting of a pan-Orthodox judgment is essential, so we recommend that the subject be substantially and thoroughly studied. With this purpose in mind, the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council should be asked to convene, as soon as possible, a conference of responsible pastors, canonists, astronomers, historians and sociologists, with the results of its work to be presented through the Secretariat to the next Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference.<sup>31</sup>

The Secretariat summoned this Congress at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambésy from 28 June to 3 July 1977.<sup>32</sup> After hearing the reports of canonists, of historians, of astronomers, of those responsible for pastoral matters and of sociologists, and in the presence of observers from the Vatican, the World Council of Churches and the Anglican Church, the consultation arrived at the following conclusions.

There have been proposals concerning the celebration of Easter on a fixed Sunday. The two most noteworthy proposals have been that in favor of the second Sunday in April and that in favor of the Sunday following the second Saturday of April. Although some Churches were in favor, pastoral concern has prevailed in dismissing this two-fold proposal, which would risk provoking schisms in certain Orthodox Churches, seeing that such a proposal betrays the letter of Nicaea's intentions and the entire Orthodox tradition, which maintains that Easter be celebrated on the Sun-

day following the first full moon after the vernal equinox.

Furthermore, the present computation of Easter, based on the old Julian calendar, has become inexact in our day; in fact, that calendar has already reached a thirteen-day lag with respect to solar time; the vernal equinox, which ought to fall on 21 March, falls only on 8 March on that calendar. Likewise, it is a fact that, in the lunar tables for the Paschalia which are still in effect for the determination of the full moon, the date of the full moon is determined with a lag of five days. This lag will increase with time. For this reason the consultation unanimously recommended to the next Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference that a commission of astronomers be entrusted with the determination, for as long a period as possible, of the Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox. The consultation saw this as a contribution to the universal determination of the date of Pascha for all Christians.

But then the question of the relation between the Jewish Passover and the Christian Easter was raised. It is asserted that Nicaea's formula for the determination of the date of the Christian Easter, without referring explicitly to the Jewish Passover, mentions it indirectly by fixing the full moon after which the Sunday following ought to be the Christian Easter. Thus the Jewish Passover ought to fall on the vernal full moon following the equinox, and the Christian Easter most assuredly comes afterward.

The problem of the Diaspora and of Orthodox minorities also was placed before the members of the consultation. They believed that a minority situation does not in itself justify taking exceptional positions to conform to the practice of the majority in a given place. That would strike a blow to the cohesion of the Orthodox Church taken as a whole.

The consultation, in line with the report of the Council's Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission which gathered at the Orthodox Center of the Ecumenical Patriarchate at Chambésy in 1971, believed that it is most desirable to study the above-mentioned questions in collaboration with all Christians who are interested in them.

After study of the Acts of the Congress, Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon, as President of the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference and with reference to his recommendation to the next Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference, viz., to instruct a commis-

sion of astronomers to designate, with minimum time-lag, the Sunday after the first vernal full moon, noted with satisfaction in a letter to the head of the Secretariat for the Preparation (23 September 1977) that "this resolution of the Congress is a happy one, giving substantial aid to a future consideration of the whole question." As interpreter of the spirit of the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference, Metropolitan Meliton went on to say that "there is no reason for a commission of astronomers, as specified, to be set up by the next Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference." Simply, the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference gave the Secretariat responsibility for summoning the Congress held to examine the question, while emphasis on the astronomical side of it is a pure technicality, to be seen as an appendix to the overall work of the Congress, and therefore a responsibility of the Secretariat. "In regard to this," he continued, "the Secretariat would do well to summon without delay such a Commission, made up of eminent astronomers, to investigate the astronomical side of the question."

Following this, the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council made contact with a large number of astronomers, who then submitted their views and lists of exact tables of the Sunday after the first vernal full moon: Professor E. R. Mustel of the Astronomical Council of the Academy of Sciences of U.R.S.S., Professor W. Fricke of the Astronomiches Recheninstitut, Professor George Kontopoulos of the Athens University Astronomical Observatory, and the U.S. Naval Observatory.<sup>33</sup>

Concerning the method of preparing the Council, the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference noted,

that the procedure established by the Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference be continually applied at all stages of elaboration of the themes, with the exception of the first stage; during this stage, the Churches are to present the results of their individual work on the themes for further pan-Orthodox consideration, not as the official view-point of a particular Church, but rather as the outcome of a purely scholarly study, so as to ensure the free course of dialogue at pan-Orthodox level.<sup>34</sup>

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that, to date, it has received and passed on to the local Orthodox Churches the following studies on the ten themes of the agenda of the Council, as entrusted to the various Churches:

- a) Patriarchate of Alexandria: studies on the “Orthodox diaspora,” “Autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed,” and “Autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed.” These were edited and submitted to the Secretariat by His Eminence Metropolitan Methodios of Aksum.
- b) Patriarchate of Antioch: studies on the “Orthodox diaspora,” “Readaptation of the ecclesiastical ordinances on fasting” and (from the general theme “Relations of the Orthodox Churches with the rest of the Christian world”), “Relations between the Orthodox and Ancient Oriental Churches.” After discussion and sanction by the Holy Synod of the Church of Antioch, these drafts were edited and submitted to the Secretariat by His Eminence Metropolitan Ignatius of Lattakia.
- c) Patriarchate of Moscow: studies on the “Orthodox diaspora,” “Autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed,” “Autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed,” and “Orthodox diptychs.”
- d) Patriarchate of Rumania: studies on the “Orthodox diaspora,” “Autocephaly and the way in which it should be proclaimed,” and “Autonomy and the way in which it should be proclaimed.”
- e) Patriarchate of Bulgaria: studies on “The calendar and the Paschalia,” dealing both with the question of a common calendar and the question “Examination of the joint celebration by all Christians of Easter on a fixed Sunday.” The Church of Bulgaria also produced a study on the extraneous question of Orthodox monasticism.
- f) Church of Poland: studies on “The question of a common calendar” and “Readaptation of the ecclesiastical ordinances on fasting.”
- g) Church of Czechoslovakia: studies on “Contribution of the local Orthodox Churches to the triumph of the Christian ideals of peace, freedom, fraternity and charity among peoples, and to the elimination of racial discrimination.”

It should be noted that the Church of Serbia maintains its study on “Readaptation of the ecclesiastical ordinances on fasting” previously submitted to the Secretariat. This study was mostly drawn on in the draft report of the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission.

The Secretariat for the Preparation of the Great and Holy Council, responsible for maintaining the preparatory procedure decided

on at the Pan-Orthodox level, has not neglected to send a reminder to those Churches which have not yet sent in their studies on the prescribed themes. The spirit is that of service to the Churches and respect for the decision of the First Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference to convene at the earliest possible date the Great and Holy Council, so hopefully awaited.

## NOTES

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4. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
5. Damaskinos Papandreou, "Prospects and Problems concerning the future Council" (in Greek), *Synodika*, 1, pp. 33-34.
6. Πρός τήν Μεγάλην Σύνοδον. I. Εἰσηγήσεις τῆς Διωρθοδόξου Προπαρασκευαστικῆς Ἐπιτροπῆς ἐπὶ τῶν ἔξι θεμάτων τοῦ πρώτου σταδίου. Σαμπεξύ - Γενεύης, 1971.
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8. *Towards the Great Council* (Russian Edition), (Chambésy - Geneva, 1971).
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11. "I sei documenti preparatori verso il concilio panortodosso," *Il Regno-Dокументi*, (1 January 1973).
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13. *Acts of the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission*. 16-28 July, 1971. Chambésy - Geneva, 1973. p. 147 (in Greek).
14. Patriarchal Letter, Ref. 273 (1972).
15. *Episkepsis*, No. 86 (1973).
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*

- 18 *Ibid* , No 111 (1974)
- 19 *Ibid* , No 146 (1976), No 147 (1976) and No 148 (1976)
- 20 Cf *Contacts*, No 73/74 (1971), *Episkepsis*, No 26 (1971)
- 21 Metropole Damaskinos de Tranoupolis "Rapport sur la preparation du Grand Concile" 1ère Conference Panorthodoxe Preconciliaire 21 28 Novembre 1976 Edition du Secretariat pour la Preparation du Concile, 1976 Annexe I, pp 170 215 (Exists also in Greek)
- 22 George Galites, *Themes of the Great Council* (Athens, 1977), p 19 (in Greek)
- 23 *Episkepsis*, No 82 (1973), No 83 (1973) and No 84 (1973)
- 24 In a personal letter to the head of the Secretariat for the Preparation of the Council
- 25 *Economy in the Church* (Athens, 1972), p vi (in Greek)
- 26 George Wagner Op cit
- 27 *First Pan Orthodox Preconciliar Conference Acts and Documents* p 190 (in Greek)
- 28 *Episkepsis*, No 185 (1978)
- 29 Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission p 126 (in Greek)
- 30 George Galites Op cit , p 49
- 31 *First Pan Orthodox Preconciliar Conference Acts and Documents* p 191 (in Greek)
- 32 *Episkepsis* No 172 (1977), Cf *St Vladimir's Seminary Theological Quarterly* 21 (1977), pp 224-28, Cf also the well-known joint Orthodox statement on the common celebration of Easter at the Fifth General Assembly of the WCC at Nairobi in *Breaking Barriers* (Nairobi, 1975), p 194
- 33 *Ibid* , No 191 (1978)
- 34 *First Pan Orthodox Preconciliar Conference Acts and Documents* p 194 (in Greek)



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**WELCOME ADDRESS  
TO THE CHRISTIAN-ORTHODOX  
AND JEWISH DELEGATIONS**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Here, in the old Town Hall's portrait-room, from whose walls the former statesmen of the Town and Republic of Lucerne look at us, I welcome you on the occasion of this unconstrained meeting.

My first greeting is addressed to the Christian-Orthodox and Jewish delegates, who come from all directions to consult in our town about present and future problems concerning our life in common and to find new ways to live together. Your encounter has a scientific character. In the rooms of the Theological Faculty of Lucerne you have been deliberating since yesterday on the theme of "The Law in Christian and Jewish Understanding." This theme is an important one, because it often has been misunderstood and misinterpreted in the past. It has worked therefore as an element of estrangement between Judaism and Christianity.

Some professors of Lucerne's Theological Faculty have been asked to join the representatives of the Orthodox Church and of Judaism. This is an honor for our Theological Faculty. But the professors of Lucerne stress that they are here only to be at your disposal, in order to help toward an efficient scientific exchange and dialogue. They derive no theological rights from the fact that they have been invited to this encounter.

My second greeting is to the ladies and gentlemen who came as guests to this reception. They all came because they want to show their sympathy toward religious, political and human understanding. Many of them have won merits working for dialogue among Christians and between faiths, as well as for the Christian/Jewish encounter.

Let me give you some fundamental reflections on the theme of your encounter:

All the important problems of man, of ethnic groups, of regions and of national territories, have become world problems today. Likewise, all historically important situations have become prob-

lems for mankind. But problems on the regional and separatist level will still remain, even though they are increasingly connected with global and human problems. This results from a shrinking world where all problems are becoming increasingly interdependent.

This interdependence has highly important consequences, not only for political action, but also for theological work. For example, in order to dialogue with one's religious neighbors, it is not enough to enter only *in principle*. Purely ideological dialogues without corresponding actions remain empty and without effect. Today, one finds it much more necessary to undertake practical steps. In so doing, we arrive at the truth *and* the concrete actions that we should take jointly. In this respect, the philosopher Karl Jaspers said: "Our generation's greatest duty is to give soul to the increasing world consciousness" (From *The Origin of History*, 1949, page 162).

The solution to these duties will be found neither in a few days, nor by a single group. But every session and every group must face up to them in some way.

One can easily go astray. For example, it would be unrealistic and irresponsible to give up valuable traditions and peculiarities only for the sake of peace. Such a shallow peace platform aiming at streamlining everything would be too cheap a price.

To support a rosy euphoria would be another error. To show just a bit of good will would not be enough to bring unity, peace and truth winging towards mankind. To bring comprehension and coalescence, we must contend with the slowness of time, with opposing forces and with the gradual growth and ripening of human efforts. It is necessary to have patience and perseverance and to cling tenaciously to the recognized common goals.

The following consideration is closely connected with the above: the sociological exchange between peoples, religions and politico-cultural systems must be *as amply and as extensively studied as possible*. It should happen no more that one would give an opinion on Jews or on the Orthodox Church without being thoroughly acquainted with the Jewish and/or the Orthodox Scriptures, traditions and faiths, and without having encountered the living representatives of Judaism and of Christian-Orthodoxy. By such a spiritual examination, no side would be exclusively the giver or the receiver. Both sides give and receive, both gain and profit from this dialogue and practical assistance. They create *renewal*. The inner strength of both sides will become fully productive and fortified

only through exchanges.

As a politician, I hope that, throughout the world, spiritual contributions will increasingly be made for the consolidation of mankind's way towards solidarity and unity, and also towards a better awareness of the particularities and values of individual groups and regions.

I hope that the delegates to this academic Jewish Christian-Orthodox encounter, through their cautious work of the next days, will be able to arrive at some fundamental principles which will have a favorable effect on their groups and on as many other people as possible.



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